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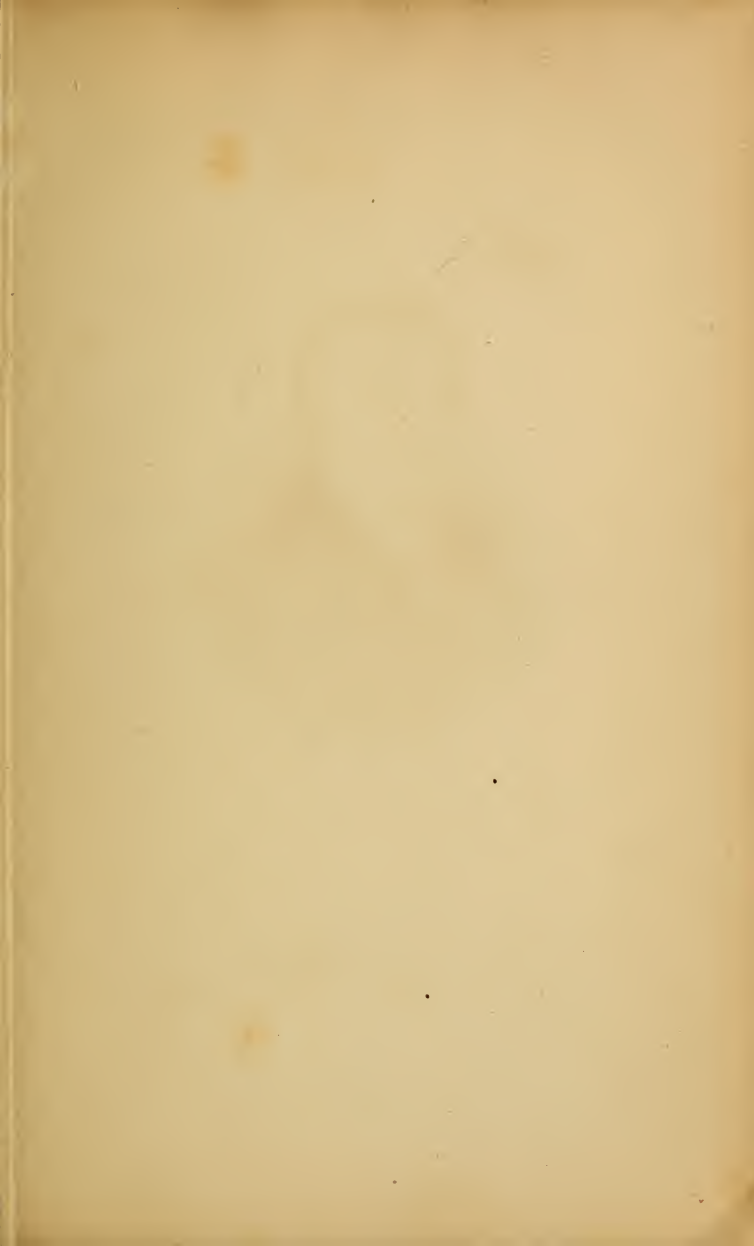
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Jeremy Belknap

✓  
LIFE

✓✓  
OF



JEREMY BELKNAP, D.D.

THE HISTORIAN OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

WITH

SELECTIONS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE

AND OTHER WRITINGS.

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COLLECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

HIS GRAND-DAUGHTER.

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NEW YORK:

HARPER AND BROTHERS,

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## PREFACE.

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THE subject of the following memoir left, at his decease, many letters and some other manuscripts, in the possession of his family, which were carefully preserved, though at the time they had no thought of making them public.

During the many years that have since passed, most of his contemporaries have disappeared. The results of some of his labors have been claimed for others, and some of his actions have been erroneously represented. His name, already indissolubly connected with the history of New Hampshire, has recently been given to a new county formed in that state, and has been used to designate several private corporations. Those who may desire to learn something of his life and character may find that obituary notices, and the periodical publications of

PREFACE.

former years, yield but scanty and unsatisfactory information.

These and other reasons have led his immediate descendants to encourage the publication of this volume, which is composed chiefly of his own writings.

J. B.

BOSTON, JULY 19th, 1847.



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# JEREMY BELKNAP.

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## CHAPTER I.

1744—1767.

*Birth and Parentage of Dr. Belknap. — His early Education. — College Life. — Schools at Milton and Greenland. — Studies for the Ministry. — Correspondence with Dr. Byles. — Invitation to Boston. — He proposes to teach the Indians. — Begins to Preach. — Half-Way Covenant. — Invitation to Dover. — Ordination.*

THE name of Belknap appears to be of Norman origin. It is found in the list of those among whom the lands of England were divided after the conquest by the Duke of Normandy; and, in the following reigns, several of the name are mentioned as judges; as sheriffs, and as otherwise connected with the practice of the law. It is also observed in the early records of the settlement of this country. How many of the name came over from England has never been ascertained. Abraham Belknap was a resident in Lynn, Massachusetts, in the year 1637;

and the next year, in a division of lands there, he received forty acres. Joseph Belknap, one of the earliest members of the Old South Church, is the first of the family known to have lived in Boston. He died in 1712, aged 82, and is buried in the old burying ground adjoining King's Chapel.

Jeremiah, a son of the preceding and grandfather of Dr. Belknap, owned houses and lands in several parts of Boston; and a street, near some of his property in the western part of the city, bears the name of Belknap. He had nine children, two of whom were sons; the elder named Joseph, the younger, Jeremiah. The latter was the father of Jeremiah and Mary Belknap, who, in 1830 and 1832, made large bequests to the Massachusetts General Hospital. The elder son Joseph, father of the subject of this memoir, was born on the 12th of February, 1717, and married, on the 30th of July, 1741, Sarah Byles, niece of the celebrated Mather Byles. He carried on the trade of a leather-dresser and dealer in furs and skins, and had a shop in the front part of his house in Ann Street.

Jeremiah Belknap was their eldest child. He was born on the 4th of June, 1744. There were several other children, only one of whom, a daughter named Abigail, lived to mature age.

The earliest relic of Jeremiah's childhood is a paper containing notes of sermons preached at the Old South Church by "Dom Williams," in the year



1754. Each sermon is divided into its different heads, and carefully dated; showing that the habits of order and neatness which distinguished him through life were thus early acquired.

His education was commenced at the school of Mr. Lovell, where he must have been studious; for he entered Harvard College on the 5th of December, 1758, in his fifteenth year.

At this period he noted down the weather daily, and such events as were worthy of remembrance, in the first of a series of interleaved Almanacs, which he continued to employ in the same manner, with the exception of a few years, during his life. The most important events noted in this year are the reduction of Louisburg and Fort Duquesne, and the expedition to Crown Point and Ticonderoga. Commencement day, the 18th of July, 1759, is remarked upon as "excessive hot;" a quality which usually belongs to it now: but an item written in the following September is rather strange to those who are acquainted with Cambridge in these days: "A great many bears killed at Camb: and the neighboring towns about this time, and several persons killed by them." Beside these Almanacs, he had little manuscript books entitled "Quotidiana Miscellanea 1, 2, 3, &c.," into which he copied extracts from the various books he was reading or studying; and the first entry in the earliest of these is an extract from "Eckard's Roman History, vol. i. preface

—page 1,” which is interesting, as showing his estimation, at this youthful period, of a character he subsequently sustained so well: “There are required so many qualifications and accomplishments in an *Histōrian*, and so much care and niceness in writing an *history*, that some have reckoned it *one of the most difficult labors human nature is capable of.*”

Among his college exercises, several of which are still preserved, is one styled a “Theme, being the employment of some leisure time, Nov. 4th, 1759.” The subject treated is “The generous man is a blessing to all mankind.” It is divided into proposition, reason, similitude, example, testimony, and conclusion; which conclusion is, “Wherefore every one who is in a capacity to do good to others is bound both by the laws of God and nature to do it; and it behoves every one to relieve those of his fellow-creatures who stand in need of it, as far as in him lies, that he may be at last remunerated by his God with this *Euge*, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord!’ J. Belknap.”—How truly these were the sentiments of his heart, and how constantly through life he acted upon a principle thus early adopted, will be seen by the reader of the following pages.

His college life was passed quietly in the pursuit of his studies, with some intervals occasioned by sickness. He was graduated on the 21st of July,



1762, and on the 10th of August began to keep the public grammar school at Milton; an employment then, as now, often chosen by young men, while preparing for the business of after life.

As the master of a public school, he held a responsible station for one so young; yet he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of the town; for, after leaving Milton a short time during the next winter, he returned at the unanimous request of the selectmen, and remained until March in 1764.

He was one whom companions and friends not only love, but reverence at an early age. The sincerity of his character, and his affectionate desire to serve those around him in any way in his power, even though he could not approve the matter himself, are shown in the following extract from a letter written the autumn after he was graduated, to a young friend at Cambridge who had requested his aid in composing a theme on the Immortality of the Soul. He sent the theme, and in the letter he says:

“Milton, October 8th, 1762.

“MY DEAREST FRIEND,

“I received yours of the 3d inst. and have endeavored to comply with your request; whether satisfactorily or no, you may judge. As I never showed any reluctance in obliging you in any respect, you may be assured that I did this with the

greatest pleasure. And though I shall never be loth to serve you in the same manner, yet I cannot recommend it to you to pursue this method, but wish that you would endeavor to acquire a better talent at composition. It would be an unspeakable advantage to you. Do not let your genius lie uncultivated, and your abilities and faculties be any longer dormant, but only put them once in action, and they will continue to supply you with whatever you want in this way with the greatest ease. I speak experimentally."

He continued to keep school while completing his studies for the ministry, and in December, 1764, he removed to Portsmouth in New Hampshire to take charge of the English school, and boarded in the family of the Rev. Samuel Haven. The next summer he kept school at Greenland, a small town six miles from Portsmouth, where he remained until called to the duties of a minister of the gospel. His conscientiousness was very great, and he forbore to preach, until he felt himself qualified. Meanwhile he suffered much from misgivings and fears.

His parents anticipated with eager hopes the time when this their beloved and only son should enter into the Christian ministry ; and while he was under the influence of feelings which made him fear he should disappoint their expectations, he wrote the following letter to his mother's uncle, Mather Byles,

disclosing the state of his mind, and requesting him to communicate it to his parents :

“ September 5th, 1765.

“ REV. AND HONORED SIR,

“ You have often talked with me about preaching, and I have seemed to decline it ; but I never gave you my reasons for it, nor could I have done it so clearly and distinctly by speaking, as I can by writing.

“ I think myself bound in duty to let my parents know of my grand objection ; but, having never yet revealed it to them, I hereby request you to do it, when you have opportunity, in such a manner as you think most proper.

“ It is a fixed and settled opinion with me, that no person ought to take on him the office of a minister of the gospel, unless he has experienced the renovating power of it on his own soul ; but, unhappy me ! I have never experienced this, and therefore I dare not preach, though I have been much urged to it.

“ But now this thought will immediately start into your mind : How dare you join with the church of Christ in their sacred communion ? Alas ! dear Sir, when I asked admission into the church, I was deceived with regard to my condition. I had before had many agonies of soul, and in the midst of these agonies resolved to be the Lord's ; but God

himself knows that I never experienced a saving change. I thought myself a proper recipient of the Holy Supper, according to Dr. Sewall's description, viz. — one that hungered and thirsted for righteousness and salvation by Jesus Christ, and was content to be saved in the gospel way. But since, I have found by undeniable evidence, that I am yet in a state of unrenewed nature, and farther from God than ever ; and, in consequence of this, I have for some time refrained my sacrilegious hands.

\* \* \* \* \*

“This is my present condition. I request your most fervent prayers for me, and your best advice.

“I am, Rev. Sir, with sincere esteem and respect,

“Your unworthy Friend,

“J. B.”

To this letter he received the following affectionate reply :

“MY DEAR CHILD,

“It is with a mixture of pleasure and sorrow that I read your letter. I am pleased to see your great care not to enter the ministry in a state of unrenewed nature ; and I am grieved at your censure upon yourself. It is impossible for your uncle to write particularly to so general a state of the case ; but I wish I could have a personal conference with you. That divinity is undoubtedly

true which Dr. Sewall gave you: 'He that consents to be saved by Christ in his own way, has saving faith.' 'He who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, has a right to the Lord's table.' Nor have you informed me how you are certain this was not your case. Perhaps you are conscious to the prevailing power of some temptation, which yet you abhor, and pray and watch against. But, while your sin really is your burthen, the way to obtain strength under it certainly is not to turn your back upon the Lord's table. God, who sees your infirmities, sees also your resistance, your agonies, your repentances. But I talk at random. Could I see you, I might perhaps speak more to the purpose.

"I am pleased to see your regards to the work of the ministry. 'Tis what you choose.' And why do you choose it? Perhaps answering this very question to yourself may relieve your anxious heart.

"May God bless you, my son, and sanctify and comfort you; and introduce you, with the noblest preparation, into the ministry.

"So prays your affectionate

"M. BYLES."

In the rejoinder to this letter of Dr. Byles, Mr. Belknap writes as though relieved in a measure from his previous state of doubt and depression.



“Greenland, October 7th, 1765.

“REV. AND DEAR SIR,

“I thank you for your kind letter, by my father. I hope your prayers and the prayers of my other friends have been presented on the golden altar before the throne of God, and been acceptable to him, as sweet incense. Pray to God for me, that I may not be mistaken in a matter of such everlasting importance; that I may not build on a false foundation. I should be glad of a personal converse with you on the important affairs of my soul and eternity, but am afraid I should not be able to express my thoughts with that freedom and ease that you would expect and desire. I believe I shall not be able to come to Boston till November. In the mean time I beseech you, dear Sir, to use your interest at the throne of grace in praying that I may be thoroughly furnished to every good work.

“Your dutiful and obliged.”

In November, 1765, the usher of the free grammar school at the North End of Boston died; and the selectmen unanimously elected Mr. Belknap to fill the vacancy; requesting him to come speedily, as Mr. Wiswell, the master of the school, was very aged and infirm.

This tempting proposal he steadily declined, — thinking the increase of salary, and the more eligi-

ble position it offered, no excuse for leaving unfulfilled his engagement at Greenland. The prospect of home and friends failed to shake his sense of justice and right, and he remained quietly where he was. A mutilated portion of his reply to the letter of the town clerk remains :

“To accept your invitation at this time would be vastly less advantageous to the town of Boston, than detrimental to the people of this place ; and I am not willing to injure them in the least degree. A quiet and comfortable country life is the greatest temporal happiness that I wish to enjoy, and I am perfectly contented with my present situation.”

Shortly after refusing this inviting proposal, the reading of Wheelock's Second Narrative suggested to his mind the idea of devoting himself for a time to the work of instructing the Indians at the school in Lebanon, Connecticut. In pursuance of this design, he wrote the following letter to the Rev. Mr. Haven, requesting his advice :

“To the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. Haven, at Portsmouth.

“Greenland, January 1st, 1766.

“REV<sup>d</sup>. AND DEAR SIR,

“Being prevented from visiting you, both by the severity of the season and the necessity of a close attention to the duties of my station, I take this method of asking your friendly advice

on a point which at present engages most of my thoughts.

“I am sensible that a great load of guilt lies heavy on this land in neglecting the means which may be used for the conversion of our Indian neighbors and countrymen to Christianity; and that it is the duty of every person, who professes a regard to the kingdom and interest of Jesus Christ, to contribute his part for this glorious purpose.

“The Charity School in Lebanon seems to be the right plan; inasmuch as divine Providence has so remarkably smiled on that institution, and hitherto succeeded the design of it. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that it should be continued, and I am sincerely willing to lend what assistance is in my power. I do not suppose that it absolutely needs any of *my* help for its support; but only ask you whether you would advise me to offer my service as a teacher to those poor aborigines there, for some months, without desiring any other reward than a subsistence during the time. I have thought much of it since I have had the pleasure of reading Mr. Wheelock’s Narrative, [A Brief Narrative of the Indian Charity School in Lebanon, Connecticut. Printed in London. 1766.] and my stipulated time at this place will cease about the beginning of next April, when I shall be at my liberty to tarry here or not. But as I do not choose to make such a proposal on a sudden, I



desire your kind advice. Please to confer with Dr. Langdon on the subject, and let me know your joint serious thoughts concerning it.

“I desire that this letter, and the contents and design of it, may be kept an inviolable secret from every other person.

“With much esteem for you both, and proper respects to your families, I am

“Your friend and servant,

“JER. BELKNAP.”

Mr. Haven's reply expresses his approval of this plan. He says, “I have taken your proposal into serious consideration, and am at present inclined to favor it.” But Dr. Langdon “thinks proper to dissent from the above advice; giving this for a reason, that he supposes the school does not stand in need of such a charity.”

This project disturbed his parents very much, as we learn from a long letter of counsel written to Mr. Belknap by his friend and classmate, the Rev. Penuel Bowen:

“Cambridge, 23d January, 1766.

“DEAR SIR,

“This being the first opportunity since the beginning, I now greet you upon the commencement of a new year; and even the long-predicted 1766, to be memorable for some extraordinary revolutions both in the natural and moral world.

A happy new year I wish you, from the profoundest part of the sincerest heart. May this year be memorable for the repeal of the S——p A——t, and other burthensome impositions; for the liberties and enlargement of America; and for the exaltation of the English nation, both in spirituals and temporals, especially the former; and, as a most signal part of this, may proper methods be used for converting the heathen; and oh may they be attended and crowned with a blessing from on high! Lastly, may this year be remembered with gladness for being that which may boast of ushering you, my worthy friend, into the office of a preacher of the gospel, and a minister of Jesus Christ.

“I, having been to Boston this day, and having the favor and happiness of being one of your good parents’ friends, had the pleasure of being presented by your father with your last letter to him, wherein you say so much about going to Lebanon to keep Mr. Wheelock’s school awhile gratis. The thought seemed no less new and surprising to your parents than to me; and you seem to acknowledge it is new to yourself too, as you intimate the particular cause of it now is your just having read Mr. Wheelock’s Continuation, &c. Not that I can suppose, my friend, any thought of good to be new to you: I know it is your old habitual turn to be meditating the common good.”

He then asks him to consider whether it is not a sudden notion; if there is not some better way of promoting this charity, and reminds him of his parents' expectation that he would "in proper time undertake the blessed work of preaching the gospel;" and says that any other change in his situation would "rather give them pain than pleasure. You can hardly imagine how their comfort depends on you, and how they are grieved when your desires counteract their judgment. And, to conclude, my advice is, if they seem to wish you would not insist in this matter, by no means to do it."

What effect this letter had, does not appear; but the design was abandoned on his learning that the school was properly supplied with teachers, and that accordingly there was no need of his services.

This desire to teach the Indians probably arose from the disturbed and unsettled state of his mind as to his qualifications for a gospel minister; and as soon as he was assured on this point, he devoted himself to his appointed work. On this subject he says himself,

"It has been my constant, habitual thought, ever since I was capable of judging, that I should preach the gospel. With this view, my parents educated me, and to this my friends have often urged and persuaded me; but for a long time all these things were in vain. I knew myself to be destitute of the grand fundamental qualification of

a true minister of the gospel, and was determined never to undertake preaching until I had obtained *a hope in Christ*. A glorious discovery of the riches and freeness of divine grace, and the infinite worthiness of the Lord Jesus Christ which I trust was made to my soul by the Holy Spirit, at once changed my views and dispositions; and from that time I devoted myself to the service of God in the gospel of his Son, thinking it my duty to glorify God in this way. My qualifications have been judged of by others. My conscience acquits me of having any mercenary views: a decent, comfortable subsistence, while I continue in this vale of tears, is all the present reward that I desire.

“I know that God has no need of any of my services; but if it shall please him to make me a humble, zealous, faithful instrument of building up the Redeemer’s kingdom, and turning sinners from the error of their ways, I shall esteem it the greatest dignity and happiness I am capable of receiving.”

His first appearance in public as a preacher was in Mr. Haven’s pulpit, at Portsmouth. Mr. M’Clintock, the clergyman at Greenland, wrote a letter to Mr. Belknap’s father on this occasion, in which he speaks of him as bidding fair to be an eminent preacher, and says he thinks the people who may be so happy as to obtain him for their minister will in him receive a “precious gift of our

ascended Lord." In the same letter, mention is made of his valuable services as a teacher, and the loss his removal would be to the people of the town, as it was feared his successor would not have "such a natural, parental care for the welfare of the children."

The half-way covenant he thought very unscriptural, and wrote to several clergymen for advice upon the subject. A letter written to Dr. Langdon states the matter thus :

"You know it is the prevailing practice in most of the Congregational churches of New England to administer the ordinance of baptism to the children of persons who are not in full communion with the church, and who are not thought to be under any obligations, by virtue of their engagements in *owning the covenant*, to sit down at the Lord's table, without a *second covenanting* or formal admission to full communion. I have for some time had a doubt in my mind whether this custom can be justified by scripture ; and, as it seems probable that I shall soon enter on the important work of the gospel ministry, it greatly concerns me to be satisfied in this particular branch of it. If this distinction of full communion and half communion has its foundation in the word of God, I desire with all reverence to admit and own it as of divine authority ; but at present I cannot see the grounds on which it is vindi-



cated. My earnest desire therefore to you is that you will be pleased to communicate your thoughts on this subject to me by letter, which will be esteemed and acknowledged as a particular favor, by, Sir,

“Your respectful and obliged friend and servant,  
“JEREMY BELKNAP.”

On this subject he wrote to his friend Mr. Bowen who declined the labor of answering his important questions, but said: “Truly as to that matter of admitting to baptism without coming to the other sacrament, I believe that all admitted to baptism by the apostles were also counted qualified to partake the other sacrament, and doubtless in general did; and it is my sentiment that so it should be at this day: but then after we have admitted duly qualified persons to baptism, they may be left to themselves whether to come to the Lord’s table or not.”

Mr. Bowen then expresses his joy, and that of Mr. Belknap’s other friends, at his having become a preacher. He says, “I find you are fired with a laudable zeal in the good cause of Christianity: the great Head of influences raise you, by still greater gifts and graces, to the highest pitch of usefulness! This, I know, is the height of your desires. You would not be famous but for doing good. Your praise beginneth to be in all the churches where you

have labored in word and doctrine. May it greatly increase and on good foundation !”

The following is an extract from Mr. Belknap’s reply :

\* \* \* “I desired to know your sentiments whether those persons who, though they profess faith, repentance, and obedience (which are all included, or ought to be, in owning the covenant), yet live in the habitual neglect of attendance at the Lord’s table, have any right, according to the apostolic or gospel constitution, to present their children to baptism. I argue on the matter thus : If the children of any have a right to baptism, they must be those of believers. Now all true believers do (visibly at least as far as they are obliged to do it) yield obedience to all the commandments of Christ. But when we see persons live in the constant habitual disregard of any one of his commands, especially one of his own ordinances, which he has appointed in his church to be a visible sign of membership among his people, and a standing seal of our engagements to keep his covenant ; I say, when we see persons do so, we cannot extend our charity to them so far as to think them true believers (I except cases of idiotism, infancy, sickness, or any other natural or providential impossibility of attending on the ordinances) ; for Christ has ordained it as a test of the

sincerity of professors, that they keep his commandments.

“I can see no reason in the plea that though they think themselves so far interested in the covenant as to bring their children to baptism, yet they are afraid to approach the Lord’s table on account of their unworthiness, &c. ; because I know no difference, according to scripture, between the qualifications requisite for one and the other. Are not baptism, and the Lord’s supper, seals of the same covenant ? How, then, can we have a right to the one, and not to the other ?

“I have taken pains to inquire into the rise and establishment of that arbitrary and unscriptural distinction between owning the covenant and fulfilling the commandment, and find in the *Magnalia*” \*\*\* Here followed a quotation, which, in the copy preserved, is omitted.

“I might make many remarks on this passage, considering how artfully and cautiously it is worded ; but I shall only say, that, although it is far more likely a puny New Hampshire pedagogue should be mistaken, than all the reverend heads in New England consolidated into a grand synodical *Caput Capitale*, yet there is at least a *possibility* that these venerable fathers were mistaken ; and it is my poor opinion that *then* the churches of New England took a grand leap in the dark from the primitive purity and simplicity of the gospel. If we must give im-



plicit faith to the determination of *fathers and councils*, let us throw away the Bible at once, and adopt the infallible decrees of *Trent, Nice, Dort*, and Boston, as the pure, uncorrupted Catholic faith. For, allowing the members who composed all these celebrated councils aforesaid to have been *honest, guileless, unprejudiced* men, there is as much reason to adopt the decrees of one as of the other, however absurd and contradictory. But I think it is time that the Scripture should be regarded as the only infallible form of sound words, and all trimming and temporizing and truckling to the humor of a depraved world entirely laid aside by the professors and preachers of a gospel which owes its origin to an independent God.

\* \* \* “There are some, and I may rank you among the number, who dare to think for themselves, and are not overborne by the torrent of prevailing custom, or browbeaten by clerical authority. You may show this letter to whom you please.”

For some months Mr. Belknap preached occasionally for the clergymen of the neighboring parishes; and on the 31st of July, 1766, a committee of the parish at Dover invited him to preach there as assistant to the Rev. Mr. Cushing, whose health was very infirm. Dr. Langdon wrote to him at this time, advising him to accept the invitation, and said, ‘Perhaps Providence may open the way for your

settlement there, which is a good situation for a minister, and probably will be more and more agreeable."

He continued to preach at Dover to the satisfaction of the people ; and, the following winter, they gave him a call to settle as colleague of Mr. Cushing, which was accepted. Meantime the custom of the half-way covenant still troubled him, and he finally addressed the church upon the subject, in a letter which concludes thus : —

"If it should please God to settle me in a pastoral relation to any church, it must not be expected that I should ever admit persons to own the covenant, without at the same time receiving them into full communion. God grant that I may never admit them to this blessed privilege, unless they give evidence sufficient for a charitable hope, that they have believed in Jesus to the saving of their souls.

"If you desire to know my sentiments on any other points, I am willing to declare them openly and unreservedly. I am

"Your unworthy brother and servant in Christ,  
"JER. BELKNAP."

A letter from Mr. William Whitwell, of Boston, to Mr. Belknap, written about this time, is worthy of notice for the very concise definition of gospel preaching it contains.

Boston, 26th July, 1766.

“To MR. JER. BELKNAP, JUN.

“Whom I trust doth and will preach the *Gospel*, namely, Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness ; — he that believeth shall be saved ; he that believeth not shall be damned.

“Mr. Erskine’s book accompanieth this, and is presented to him by, Sir, yours to serve,

“WM. WHITWELL.”

There was but one sentiment among the people of Dover with regard to Mr. Belknap. After he had preached “as a probationer” for a month, the church committee voted unanimously in his favor ; and at a meeting of the parish, the same unanimity prevailed.

It was “unanimously voted, that said parish pay Mr. Jeremiah Belknap one hundred pounds, lawful money, yearly or every year, as a salary from the time of his accepting said call, during the time he shall continue our minister, and in full therefor.”

Also, “unanimously voted, that the parish give Mr. Belknap one hundred and fifty pounds, lawful money, and to be paid at the following periods, viz. : fifty pounds in three months, and fifty pounds in six months, and fifty pounds in nine months next after his ordination, to be raised by the selectmen of said parish for the time being, which is to provide himself a convenient house to dwell in during his minis-

try amongst us ; or, instead of said one hundred and fifty pounds, that the parish shall provide him a convenient house, barn, and garden, during said term ; and that it is left to his determination and choice to accept the said one hundred and fifty pounds, or the house, garden, &c."

To these proposals he replied as follows :

" To the Parishioners of the first parish in Dover :

" Your late call and proposals to me made I have taken into serious consideration ; and as, from various concurring circumstances, the joint invitation of the church and parish here seems to be the voice of Divine Providence, I think it my duty with all humility to accept it, looking to the great Head of the Church for grace and strength to fulfil the duty of a gospel minister.

" Concerning the proposals of settlement, though I had no objections to make to them, yet I did not think myself qualified to judge whether they were sufficient for my comfortable subsistence in life, if it should please God that I should have a family ; and therefore I thought it advisable to consult with some of my friends who were judges. Their opinion is, that, since I am to have no parsonage land, there ought to be added to my annual salary, as many cords of wood as will be necessary for the use and convenience of a family during the year ; but, seeing you have your aged and venerable pastor to

care for in the decline of life, I shall waive that matter, — not without hope, that, should I live to see some of your present expenses terminate, you will make some provision of that kind for me, if you shall judge it necessary. The salary of £100 per annum I accept, on condition that two payments be made every year, namely, one half at the end of every six months from the date hereof ; and as you have offered me the choice of a house, or £150 in lieu thereof, I accept the said £150, to be paid in the manner proposed.

“ Having now devoted myself to the service of God in the gospel of his Son, and (as I trust), agreeable to the divine will, taken on me the care of your souls ; sensible of my own insufficiency to discharge this duty in a right manner, I must ask your earnest prayers for me, that I may obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful, and that my labors may be rewarded with abundant success ; so shall your souls be my joy and crown of rejoicing at the second coming of Jesus Christ.

“ JEREMY BELKNAP.

“ Dover, January 19th, 1767.”

On the 27th of January, at a meeting of the church, it was voted to send to twenty-two churches, and the ordination took place on the 18th of the next month. The sermon on the occasion was preached by the Rev. Dr. Haven, of Portsmouth.



## CHAPTER II.

1767—1774.

*His Marriage. — Correspondence with Capt. Waldron. — Letters to Peter Thacher. — Letter to his Father. — Sandemanians. — Letter to Captain Waldron. — Sermon on Military Duty. — Correspondence with Governor Wentworth. — Letter to the Selectmen. — Letter to a Collegian. — To Rev. John Stafford. — Spinning Match.*

ON the 15th of June, 1767, Mr. Belknap was married to Miss Ruth Eliot, daughter of Samuel Eliot, bookseller in Cornhill, Boston; a lady possessing many amiable qualities. The following concise account of the wedding journey to and from Boston is taken from the interleaved Almanac for this year :

“ June 12th. Set out for Boston, lodged North Hill.

13th. Travelled to Ipswich; met Governor Wentworth on the road; he entered Portsmouth this day.

14th. Preached at Ipswich.

15th. Reached Boston; evening *married*.

18th. Set out on our return, rode through the rain, and lodged at Hampton, Mr. Thayer's.

19th. Got home to Dover in the evening safe and well.”



Thomas Westbrook Waldron was, at this period, one of the most influential men in Dover. He was the first volunteer from New Hampshire in the expedition to Cape Breton, in 1745, where he bore a captain's commission ; and he was subsequently a member of the general court. His friendship was much relied upon and highly esteemed by Mr. Belknap, who, in returning to Dover from Boston in the spring of 1767, rode, on the journey, Capt. Waldron's horse, which died shortly after from some injury received. This occasioned the following correspondence :

FROM MR. BELKNAP TO CAPT. WALDRON.

“ SIR,

“ I never heard till this day, that your horse was dead of the wound which he got by my riding him from Boston. Justice demands and gratitude obliges me, to offer a compensation. I therefore sincerely and readily make you an offer of my horse (valued at £12, which is the sum I gave for him), and will give you a promissory note of as much more as you shall judge will make an equivalent.

“ I am very sorry for your loss, and that I was the occasion of it ; but can truly say, I shall *be glad* if you will accept what I have offered above.

“ I am, Sir, with the greatest respect,

“ Your obliged, humble servant,

“ JER. BELKNAP.”

“ July 15th, 1767.

Captain Waldron replied as follows :

“REV. SIR,

“My horse slipped his wind the 20th June last, under the care of Farrier Coleman. If some unconcerned, officious gabbler had not blabbed the secret, I trust a jubilee year from that Hegira would have passed, without its reaching your ears.

“I never had the slightest thought of your making any satisfaction for him, and now freely declare, that I disclaim any demand that could be made relative thereto on Mr. Belknap by his

“Most respectful, humble servant,

“THOMAS W. WALDRON.”

July 16th, 1767.”

Peter Thacher, the eldest son of Oxenbridge Thacher, who was an eminent lawyer in Boston, was one of Mr. Belknap's early friends. Their acquaintance commenced at Milton, when Peter was only twelve years old ; a very young companion, it would seem, for Mr. Belknap ; but he was of a serious nature, so that it was said of him, “he was never a child.” In one of his letters he mentions the conduct which secured his regard.

“Do you not remember, when you kept school at Milton, how openly and unreservedly you treated me ; how you admitted me to your confidence, although I was a child ? That treatment won my soul.”

In 1765, Oxenbridge Thacher died, and his son Peter entered Harvard College at the age of thirteen years. He continued to correspond with Mr. Belknap. He thanks him for "kind, friendly, father-like advice;" and, conscious of possessing no ordinary powers of mind, he says: "I am very sensible there is a great talent put into my hands, and I beg your prayers that I may improve it to the best advantage." To do this, he resolved to become a preacher. In February, 1769, he wrote to Mr. Belknap as a "friend and father," to announce his determination, and request assistance and advice in his studies. In compliance with this request, the following letter was written:

TO MR. PETER THACHER, AT COLLEGE.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am extremely pleased with your late letter. It is not a want of regard, but of leisure and opportunity, that has prevented my writing to you for some time past. However, I will now break through all impediments, and express to you the joy I conceived at reading your letter, and endeavor to give you some cautions and advice which you have requested. I trust you will receive them with candor, and not think me dictatorial.

"Nothing would please me more than to hear of your entering Christ's kingdom, and determining to devote yourself to the gospel ministry. In order to

this, it is essentially necessary that you be renewed after the image of God. "The change you have experienced, you trust is saving." I have no reason to suspect you of insincerity in this declaration ; but let me remind you of these words, 1 Kings xx. 11, 'Let not him that girdeth on his harness, boast himself as he that putteth it off.' You are but just setting out in the Christian ministry, and you must expect to meet with many difficulties and discouragements ; you will find many things to damp your hopes, and shake your confidence, if you are a true Christian. The more you grow acquainted with your own heart, the more odious will you appear in the sight of God, and the less reason will you have to value and approve yourself. You will find that the assurance of hope is not to be obtained, but by the most laborious and painful pursuit ; that you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, but through much tribulation. You must remember, that humility and meekness are distinguishing marks of a Christian, and self-flattery a certain mark of an hypocrite. Let not my friend think that I suspect him of hypocrisy, but only that I am giving him some faithful cautions, which I find of unspeakable use and service in the Christian life.

"As to your studying Divinity, I would impart my very soul to you in Christian tenderness and faithfulness. In the first place, you must remember that Divinity is *the knowledge of divine things*, and

not *human opinions* : therefore, in the pursuit of this noble science, you must take this for your motto, Isaiah ii. 22, ‘ Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils ; for wherein is he to be accounted of ? ’

“ Would you know the virtues of any particular sort of water, it would be more irrational to seek it in the muddy streams, than in the pure original fount ; so, if you would know the truth as it is in Jesus, you must not seek it in the writings of uninspired men, but in the oracles of unerring truth. Divinity is not the art of disputing about divine truth, nor of puzzling yourself and others with metaphysical subtleties ; but it is the knowledge of God and Christ, and the Gospel. And where is this to be found, but in the revelation which God has made to the world ? To these pure and unerring oracles, I would direct you ; there you may search for and receive divine truth, without the least suspicion of being deceived, provided you come with an humble, meek, and teachable soul, as a new-born babe desiring the sincere milk of the word, &c.

“ But, if you make systematical and polemical authors your chief study, you will be in danger of having your mind turned away from the simplicity of the Gospel, and of being led into some scheme of religion that will be set up as an idol in your heart, and be made use of as a standard to try all other opinions by. Many persons are carried away with



the reigning opinion in the place where they happen to live, and yet their minds are so prejudiced in favor thereof as to be deaf to the conviction of its falsity.

“But let my dear friend remember, that he is to call no man master ; for one is his Master, even Christ.

“As to directing you to books, I would be very cautious ; and I would advise you to take heed how you hearken to the advice of any men, how great soever be their knowledge and attainments. Whatever books you are directed to, read them as the opinions of men only ; for there are many deceivers gone forth into the world, and it is not safe for you to give implicit faith to any of them.

“Another hint may be serviceable, that is, when you are studying divine truth, remember that it is not a speculative science like mathematics, or astronomy, but ’t is of the utmost importance to your own soul ; ’t is the knowledge of what is necessary to your own eternal well-being. Let this influence you to make personal and particular application to yourself of what you read : thus you will not only improve your understanding, but grow in holiness, which you will find of unspeakable advantage to your future ministrations, especially in private visits and conversation. A minister must not only know divine truth as a distant, speculative notion, but have it in his heart as a living, operative principle. There



is a coarse proverb somewhere, that sound may pass through a ram's horn without straightening it, which may be very well applied to many that preach the gospel now-a-days: they only are instruments of conveying sound to the ears of their auditors, and that sound affects themselves no more than if it were of no importance. The Lord keep you and me from being of this unhappy number.

"In searching the scriptures, it will not be of any real advantage to you to run to comments whenever you meet with a passage whose meaning is not obvious: use a Bible with a translator's margin.

"The shortest way of coming at the truth is the best. I would have you prefer such books as aim directly at it, without a tedious, circumlocutory string of arguments to prove self-evident propositions, which is often the case with polemical and systematical writers: perhaps Dr. Doddridge's lectures may serve instead of a vast catalogue of authors, as he shows their various opinions in a clear and compendious view.

\* \* \* "The lives of good ministers. \* \*

"A preacher ought to be conversant with the history of the church, where he will find indeed much to exercise his patience, especially from the time when the heathen persecution ceased, to the reformation; but the whole is improving, and much of it will serve to show the folly of departing from the word of God, and recurring to the opinions of men.

“For experimental divinity, Mr. Edwards on the Affections, and Stoddard’s Safety of Appearing, are excellent ; but even these must be read with circumspection. Mr. John Erskine gives a clear account of Faith, &c.” Here the rough draught of the letter, from which the above is copied, terminates abruptly.

The attempt to reform the church, so conscientiously made, disturbed his friends ; and some extracts from a letter to his father, in reply to one expressing uneasiness on this account, show the sincerity and purity of his intentions, and give his reasons for opposing the prevailing custom :

“July 31st, 1771.

“HON. SIR,

“I am sorry that any thing which you have heard of me gives you uneasiness. What I have done was the free and voluntary act of my own mind, upon a deliberate and full conviction of its being agreeable to the will of Christ, and an indispensable duty required of me as his servant.

\* \* \* \* \* “The Puritans in England carried their ideas of reformation farther than any set of men in their day ; and some of the first settlers of New England, who were of this stamp, set up churches very near the ancient apostolic model ; but has it not been the common topic of our Fast-Day sermons for seventy or eighty years past ? ‘How is the gold become dim, and the fine

gold changed ! ’ ‘ We are become the degenerate plants of a strange vine,’ &c. Upon these occasions how common is it to lament the sad degeneracy of the times, and urge the necessity of reformation, bringing into view the pious example of our forefathers, and contrasting it with the appearances of the present day, praying for a revival of religion, and the outpouring of the Spirit ! But after this annual task is over, what becomes of the desired reformation ? Who stirs a step towards it ? It is all blown away in the wind, and we hear no more of it till the next anniversary. Is not God mocked by such prevarication ? Does not his jealousy burn against such a nation as this, who draw nigh to him with their lips, while their heart is far from him ? \* \*

“ The voice of Christ to us is, *Repent and do the first works* ; but who hears and obeys it ? If an individual is so affected with the solemnity and importance of this voice, as to think himself inexcusable in not obeying it, what must he do ? Must he wait for the whole body of the clergy to unite in this work, to deny themselves, and forsake all to follow Christ ? As soon may he expect to see the scattered stars in the firmament unite into one compact body like the *Pleiades*. The body of the clergy, in all ages and nations, have always been the most bitterly set against reformation ; and why the clergy in New England should be thought any more disposed to it than those of other countries, no man can

tell. The reason is plain and evident: their interest is too nearly connected with the corruptions of religion in the present day, to suffer them to discountenance it. For instance, what would become of their interest if they should discountenance the prevailing mode of owning the covenant, considered as a distinct thing from admission to full communion?  
 \* \* \* \* "How was Mr. Edwards, of Northampton, treated, because he could not remain unequally yoked with unbelievers?"

"If a general reformation in this and other respects is not to be hoped for from the united efforts of the clergy, what must a poor individual do, who is determined to live godly in Christ Jesus, and follow after that purity in faith and practice which he believes Christ requires in his people now, as much as he did in his primitive churches? What but make known his sentiments, with the scriptural reasons on which they are founded, to the particular society with which he is connected, to see whether they will hear the voice of Christ or no? This I have done, and have done it in a way that I thought liable to no exception, namely, by conference.  
 \* \* \* \*

"I desire your prayers that I may be directed by God, and enabled to seek the true interest of religion, though it should prove to be a distinct thing from my own temporal interest, &c.

"Yours, J. B."

In consequence of his exertions, all the former members of the church renewed their covenant, except "scrupulous consciences or scandalous sinners." The children of the former were admitted to baptism; the latter were denied the privilege, and admonished to repent: but no new members were admitted without acknowledging their obligation to attend the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and their intention by the help of the divine Spirit to act accordingly.

The sect called Sandemanians appeared about this time in New England. The chief of this religious party, from whom their name is derived, was Robert Sandeman, first a Congregational preacher at Edinburgh: he was a disciple of Mr. John Glas, from whom this denomination are called Glasites in Scotland. Sandeman came to New England, about the year 1764; his peculiar doctrines attracted much attention; and societies were formed in Boston, Portsmouth, and several other places.

This zealous reformer, with some of his allies, would have been very glad to have numbered Mr. Belknap among their converts; and his dissent from one prevailing custom of the New England churches, probably gave them some hope of success. Their efforts for this end were unavailing, as the penetration of that gentleman was not slow in discovering their design, though craftily hidden under various pretexts; and all they effected was a misrepresenta-



tion of his character by Robert Sandeman, in a letter to one of his friends in London, which was read in their public meeting, April, 1769.

The paragraph is as follows :

“Mr. Belknap, a preacher at ——, who is so exasperated and wilfully blinds his eyes from the truth, that he has raised a bone of contention among his people. I had a long conference with him on the scriptures, but he is wilfully obstinate in his way. Thus we see the words of our Saviour justly come to pass, that they will not come unto him, &c.”

The above paragraph is an apt illustration of the way in which malice defeats itself. These violent expressions, instead of injuring the person to whom they were applied, only serve to show clearly the vexation and disappointment of Sandeman himself, at having failed to gain so important a convert ; and the blow aimed at Mr. Belknap's character recoils upon his own.

He died in Danbury, Connecticut, 2d April, 1771, aged 53 years. His epitaph contains the distinguishing tenet of the sect — “that the bare work of Jesus Christ, without a deed or thought on the part of man, is sufficient to present the chief of sinners spotless before God.”

For a further account of this sect, the curious reader is referred to the “View of Religions, by Hannah Adams.” They seem to have passed quietly away, leaving behind scarcely a trace of their



existence except a few forgotten volumes, and their place is occupied among us by more modern extravagances.

Mr. Belknap was very modest in estimating his own powers, and willing to be guided in the use of them by friendly advice, as is shown by the following letter to Captain Waldron :

“SIR,

“You cannot help having observed in me an inquisitive disposition in historical matters. I find it so strong and powerful, and withal so increasing with my opportunities for gratifying it, that it has become a question with me, whether I might not freely indulge it, with a view to the benefit of my fellow-men, as well as for my own improvement. As it is natural for us to inquire into the ancient state and circumstances of the place of our own abode, and to entertain a peculiar fondness for such inquiries in preference to more foreign matters ; so I have applied myself in some leisure hours (making it of late my principal amusement) to learn what I can from printed books and manuscripts, and the information of aged and intelligent persons, of the former state and affairs of this town and province.

“The knowledge I have yet obtained is at present very imperfect ; but I find a disposition to pursue it with a view to the collecting some memoirs, which may in future time, after much reviewing and cor-

recting by myself and others, be made public. And as I have never in a formal manner acquainted you with it, I now take this method of doing it for this reason, namely, because I have such a value for your judgment, and must depend so much on your favor and assistance in the prosecution of such a work, that it would be arrogant in me to determine to pursue it without your approbation, and the promise of your help ; and I am loth to put you to the trouble of an immediate answer, but should be glad if you would think of it, and let me know your mind at such time and in such manner as will best suit you.

“I desire you would speak freely ; and if you think that my age or abilities, or circumstances as a minister, or opportunities for collecting fit materials, or any other matters, are objections against my undertaking it, I shall immediately give up all thoughts of making public any thing of the kind, and shall confine myself entirely to my own amusement.

“July 17th, 1772.”

A muster of militia was to take place in Dover in November, and Captain Waldron expressed a wish to Mr. Belknap, that he would preach a sermon to the soldiers on military duty. At first he declined, thinking the subject not a fitting one for a clergyman ; but his own words are the best.

“Such a discourse, on such an occasion, delivered

by a statesman, with that flow of pathetic eloquence which the subject naturally tends to inspire, would be a most graceful and pleasing entertainment, and might be reckoned the most useful performance of the day ; but for me to attempt any thing of the kind, would, I think, be rather improper.

“ The business of a gospel minister is to promote the kingdom of the *Prince of Peace*, by enlightening the conscience, or reforming the morals of mankind ; but I do not at present conceive how such a formal discourse can tend to either of these purposes. Perhaps you may think that the same objection will lie against my engaging in another design, with which you are already acquainted ; but if I did not think it might be so managed as not only to be a detail of facts, but also a conveyance of reflections tending to the advancement of religion and morality, I would entirely lay it aside as unbecoming my profession. ‘ An historian,’ says a judicious author at my elbow, ‘ ought to demand of himself, at every touch, whether that reflection will assist in promoting the knowledge, virtue, and happiness of human nature : he ought to reject whatever does not carry that end in view.’ ”

A week later, Mr. Belknap wrote as follows :

“ SIR,

“ My attempts for obtaining a conference with you upon the subject of your last week’s letter

having proved ineffectual, I am not apprised of your sentiments on the objection which I made to the proposal. My desire of gratifying you, added to the natural love which I bear to my country, and willingness to promote its best interests, has led me further to consider the matter which you referred to my attention ; and I have placed it in such a point of view as I think brings it under a moral consideration.

“War (though in some cases lawful and necessary) is such an evil as ought to be dreaded and guarded against as much as is in the power of human wisdom. Every community ought to use the most likely means to guard and protect itself against every kind of injury, and maintain that public peace which is so desirable and essential a part of public happiness ; without which, life, liberty, and property, cannot be safe. And if it should appear that the promoting military discipline is a means of preserving peace ; of rendering ourselves formidable, so as to keep an enemy from disturbing us ; then it ought to be encouraged as such, and not as a means of destroying mankind.

“If I surround my house with sharp palisadoes, it is not from a desire of hurting my enemies, but to keep myself secure : if they will assault me, they must take the consequence.”

The sermon was accordingly written, and was preached at Dover, Nov. 10th, 1772, before his Excellency, John Wentworth, Esq., governor of His Majesty's province of New Hampshire, at a review of the second regiment of Foot in said province; and met so favorable a hearing, that the officers requested a copy for the press, which was granted.

This discourse was referred to by Governor Wentworth, in a letter to Mr. Belknap, written more than twenty years after its delivery, as having convinced him of the folly of attempting to destroy Christianity by force of arms, and afforded him consolation during the calamitous events of the French Revolution.

The text was that reply of Jesus to Pilate, "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." A few extracts will serve to show how the subject is treated.

"The meek and compassionate Redeemer of the world, who 'came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them,' though he commands his disciples to 'live peaceably with all men, to be tender-hearted and forgiving, even toward their bitterest personal enemies,' yet does not expect that, considered as members of civil societies, they should tamely submit to such injuries as tend to overthrow the peace and safety of the kingdoms of this world in which they dwell."



“What a striking proof of the lawfulness of self-defence has our blessed Lord given us in that noble testimony which he bore to ‘the truth,’ when he stood unjustly arraigned before Pilate’s bar, explaining and vindicating his claim to the kingdom of Israel! In answer to Pilate’s demands, ‘whether he was king of the Jews,’ and ‘what he had done,’ our Lord declares, ‘My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence.’ By this ‘good confession,’ he cleared himself from the charge of being an enemy to Cæsar, and proved that he had no design to set up as a rival to the Roman government, yet still holding his claim to the title of King, and declaring the nature of his kingdom to be entirely different from all the kingdoms of this world, which cannot subsist without the means of self-defence. It is plain that Christ did not allow his disciples to fight in his defence; for he had just before reproved Peter for drawing his sword and smiting the High Priest’s servant, and it is as plain from our Lord’s own declaration, that if his kingdom had been of this world he would have allowed them to fight for him.” \* \*

“That Christ makes a distinction between his new kingdom and the ancient kingdom of Israel, appears from this clause, ‘but now is my kingdom not from hence.’ The word *now* implies that there



was some alteration made in the nature of his kingdom, or that what was before his kingdom did now cease to be so, and give way to a more pure and spiritual dispensation.” \* \* \*

“ We are, then, to consider our Lord’s words as holding forth to us these two contrasted truths : That when God’s kingdom subsisted under a temporal form, as a kingdom of this world, it was both lawful and necessary that it should be defended by the sword. But,

“ That that ancient constitution is now dissolved, and the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, not of this world, and therefore not capable of being defended by the sword.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Whoever understands the nature of Christ’s kingdom must be sensible that an attempt to defend it by arms would be equally rash and ridiculous, it being absolutely impossible to do it. Men may defend what they call the kingdom of Christ ; they may defend a form of Christianity which has been interwoven with their civil government, and makes a part of their constitution. Such establishments may be defended and may be destroyed by the sword ; and if every such establishment were actually destroyed, the kingdom of Christ would still subsist unhurt ; for it is not in the power of men or devils to abolish that glorious constitution which is “ built on the foundation of the apostles and pro-

phets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.' " \* \* \*

"It is in vain, then, to think of using the sword in defence of Christ's kingdom : it is so spiritual and heavenly in its nature, that no weapon formed against it shall prosper, nor can any weapon used in its defence be of the least avail. It is able to subsist in the world, not only without help from the kingdoms of the world, but even in defiance of all their art and strength, all their malice and enmity, against it. And as it receives no support from, so it does no injury to them. It does not interfere with any of their natural rights and privileges. It makes no alteration in their constitutions. It does not deprive the prince of the allegiance of his subjects, nor the subjects of the protection of their sovereign ; but it leaves all matters relating to civil society and government in the same state as it found them, only enforcing the natural duty of subjection and obedience to the higher powers from the noblest motives ; and as to the natural right which all the kingdoms of this world have to defend themselves by the sword, Christ has never made the least alteration, but has rather implicitly *recognized* and allowed it."

The Governor had a high opinion of Mr. Belknap, and wished him to educate his nephew. To induce him to undertake this charge, he wrote the following letter :

"Portsmouth, January 1st, 1770.

"REV. SIR,

"Being very solicitous for the future welfare of my nephew Mark Wentworth (who is now more than seven years old), which I know wholly depends on a wise, kind, and virtuous education; and considering the utter impossibility of my having sufficient time to undertake so important and so interesting a charge; I am therefore induced to request this essential favor of you. This boy is intimately dear to me. Fine health, a good disposition, and great vivacity, promise every improvement if under your care. Permit me, then, to beg you'll receive him into your family: under such circumstances, I shall delight in any expense, and, relying on your goodness, have no terms to propose, only that you'll take the lad, and give me leave to embrace yours: which will extremely oblige,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your most obedient Servant,

"J. WENTWORTH."

The following is an extract from the reply to this letter:

"Dover, January 8th, 1770.

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

"I acknowledge myself much honored and greatly obliged by your Excellency's good opinion of me, implied in the very important request made

by your letter of the 1st inst. Permit me, Sir, to express my sincere wish, that I may not be so unhappy as to forfeit your favorable sentiments, by the answer which I am obliged to return.

“Were my situation such as to permit my close attention to the business of education, nothing would equal the pleasure with which I should embrace such an opportunity of showing my duty and respect to your Excellency, and my tender regard to the child who is the object of so much affection. But divine Providence has committed to my immediate and particular charge an increasing family, the due regulation of which requires as much of my time and thoughts as will consist with the pastoral care of a great number of immortal souls, to whom I must devote the principal part of my time; being obliged thereto, not only by my solemn vows, but by their kindness to me, and the competent provision which they have made for my support.

“That sense of my duty which lies always on my conscience, forbids my admitting of any unnecessary interruption to its faithful discharge; and that improvement of my time therein, which I am bound to by the most sacred engagements, leaves me no vacant hours for so constant, regular, and critical an attention, as the education of a child of such a rank in life, and such raised expectations, demands; and should I give him only such an irregular and immethodical education as my present circumstances

will allow, it would be a mispence of money, and would afford neither profit to the child, nor credit to myself.

“If, to use your Excellency’s words, you ‘find the utter impossibility of your having sufficient time to undertake so important and interesting a charge,’ by reason of the public business with which our gracious sovereign hath intrusted your Excellency, I may justly hope to stand excused in your view from engaging in that which would in any measure hinder me from faithfully discharging the trust committed to me by the Supreme Ruler.

“Captain Waldron has made me a visit, to second your Excellency’s request, and offer me his son of the same age as a companion to your nephew; and could I attend the business, I would readily undertake it; but I find so many weighty reasons operating the contrary way, that I must deny myself the pleasure which would otherwise result from it; nor is this the only time that I have been obliged to withstand pressing requests of the same nature from kind and worthy friends both here and elsewhere.”

The ‘competent provision,’ mentioned in this letter, was a salary of £100 a year, to be paid once in six months; and the failure of the parish to fulfil their obligations in this particular, finally caused his departure from Dover, after a great deal of suffer-



ing. A letter to the selectmen in October, 1773, shows the difficulty with which any payment was obtained.

“GENTLEMEN,

“As the appointment of the same person to be collector both of the province and parish taxes has been a detriment to me, because my salary has not been paid so punctually as when the collector for the parish had no other office ; and as I understand that the collector this year has an additional service to perform, and is to pay a large sum to the county treasurer in December, and to the province treasurer in January, whereby I have reason to fear, from former experience of this kind, that I shall not be able to obtain from him a seasonable supply of money for necessary purposes at this time of the year ; this is therefore to put you in mind, that, by the terms of my settlement which you may see in the parish records, I have a right to the payment of my salary every six months ; and if these terms were complied with, I should have had fifty pounds paid me by the 19th of September.

“I desire therefore, Gentlemen, that you would consider my claim of fifty pounds in September to be prior to the demands, either of the county or province treasurers, and would direct the collector accordingly.

“That the payment of it may not be difficult, I



shall consider what I have received by the contribution, and of particular persons with whom I have dealings, as part of it ; so that I suppose, if ten or fifteen pounds is paid me by the collector by the 19th of November, it will be sufficient to answer my present purposes."

Mr. Belknap possessed one important qualification for the ministerial office, which requires him who holds it to be the adviser or reprover, as occasion demands, of those who are under his pastoral care ; by this is meant a singular felicity in expressing disagreeable truths in a pleasant manner, so that no ill feeling was roused in the person addressed. One of his friends used to say he was the only person within his knowledge, who could communicate to parents the fact of a child's want of capacity, without giving offence ; and he says himself, ' Where the matter of any subject is in itself disagreeable, it is no easy thing to represent it in such a manner as will make it agreeable.' Yet the following letter to a young collegian, though on a very unpleasant subject, his own follies and sins, is written in a spirit so truly kind and Christian, that it could hardly have been unwelcome or disregarded :

"DEAR SIR,

"I hardly know how to address you on such an occasion, as letters of this kind seldom gain a

favorable reception, and I have exposed myself to resentment by such means ; but an honest regard to your welfare must prevail over every other consideration, and I am certain I cannot deserve contempt, though I should chance to experience it.

“ My indistinct knowledge of particular circumstances may apologize for mistakes ; but the common report concerning your behaviour, and my knowledge of the temptations of a college life, have for some time past given me great concern on your account, and strongly urged me to write to you ; but hoping that the advice of your worthy President, whose friendship for your family is very great, would have some good effect upon you, I forbore till I heard the melancholy account of the public disgrace to which you have exposed yourself. And now, my dear friend, I must express my very hearty sorrow to you on the occasion.

“ I have been a witness to the tender solicitude of your worthy parents concerning you, ever since you have been at college. When they have exerted themselves so much beyond their ability to give you an education, and experienced such kind assistance from their friends in hope that it would turn to good account, and that all would be richly repaid by your improvement in knowledge and virtue, and other amiable accomplishments for usefulness in the world,—how mortifying must it be to them to hear of your unworthy behavior, and exposing yourself to the reproaches of a malignant world !

“Were the eccentricities of your conduct confined within the circle of your intimate acquaintance, or known only to God and yourself, they would call for deep self-abasement and humiliation ; but when they are so public, how much louder is the call to a serious consideration of their unhappy effects on your own reputation and usefulness, as well as their pernicious influence upon others !

“My dear friend, I am far from thinking you the worst or most abandoned of sinners. I know very well the temptations to which you are exposed, having experienced them all ; and I know the good effects of faithful admonition. You cannot but know, in your retired hours, that you have disgraced yourself and offended your best friends, however fond a youthful imagination may be of palliating crimes ; \* \* \* and you cannot take it amiss, that I should assume this character, and advise you to wipe away the stain you have brought on your character, by a serious repentance and visible amendment.”

Mr. Belknap's life was now one of constant and laborious occupation. Devoted to the duties of his calling, to which he would gladly have given his whole time, the failure of the parish to pay him his salary, which was barely sufficient for the support of his family, obliged him to practise the most severe economy in the management of household affairs ;

and, as his children advanced, the want of a school compelled him to become their instructor.

The unsettled state of public affairs, the prevailing discontent with the mother country, and the effects which the policy pursued were producing, are thus forcibly described in a letter to Mr. John Stafford, a dissenting clergyman in London :

“The paper on which I write is the manufacture of this country, where many valuable arts and manufactures, unknown till of late, are now gaining ground, and yield a pleasant prospect of our future wealth and greatness. If the present despotic system formed on your side the water is continued, we expect to see our seaport towns diminished ; but our inland territories will be vastly improved, and a foundation laid for a considerable empire in time to come. Your ministry and parliament are undesignedly taking the most direct steps to accomplish this end. Had the lenient spirit of George the Second’s reign continued to this time, our pockets would have been emptied, and our lands mortgaged to the British merchants, while we should have had nothing to show for them but idle superfluities.

“But the rage of jealous prerogative has awakened our native spirit of freedom, and taught us the wisdom of saving our money, and improving our own country. Your manufacturers are frequently coming over to us ; and every regiment sent to keep us

in awe, furnishes artists of various kinds, who prefer a quiet settlement in their proper business, to the noise and discipline of a camp, and, by deserting their military slavery, serve this community in an honorable and important way.

“The tyranny formerly established in Great Britain drove our forefathers hither, and began the settlement of this valuable country. Wiser princes who succeeded, reaped the benefit thereof, in the commerce, bravery, and affection of this people.

“The tyranny now establishing will, while it subsists, hinder our being serviceable to the British kingdom, but will cause such a vast increase of power as will make future monarchs esteem American loyalty the brightest jewel in their crown.

“These sentiments are not the reveries of enthusiasm, but the most probable consequences that can be foreseen. However, I can venture to assure you, there is not a man in America who would wish for a divorce from the British nation, if the equity and moderation of the last reign could be restored.”

Dover, which is now one of our principal manufacturing towns, had not at that time made use of the power to create wealth that lay concealed in the waters of the Coheco ; and the force of steam was yet undeveloped, so that all the spinning and weaving was household labor. To encourage industry, spinning matches were held from time to time ; and



an account of one at Mr. Belknap's house is given in a small memorandum, as follows :

“After the laudable example of the ladies in divers towns of this and the neighboring provinces, on Thursday last, about forty ladies met at the minister's house in Dover, some of whom brought with them flax and cotton to spin, and others the yarn ready spun ; and, after spending the day in a very industrious and agreeable manner, they generously presented to Mrs. Belknap the fruits of their labor, which amounted to 242 skeins of seven knots each, beside the surplus of their materials, which the time did not allow them to spin. They behaved with the utmost order and decency, and were entertained with the best refreshments the season afforded, which were kindly and plentifully supplied by those who were well-wishers to industry.”



## CHAPTER III.

1774—1782.

*Journey to Dartmouth College. — Correspondence with Colonel Phillips. — Excitement at Portsmouth. — Address to People of New Hampshire. — Address to British Officers. — Extracts from Commonplace Book. — Breaking out of Hostilities. — Mr. Belknap is invited to be Chaplain to the Troops at Cambridge. — Visits the Camp. — Letters of Dr. A. Eliot.*

IN the summer of 1774, Mr. Belknap journeyed to Hanover, to attend the Commencement at Dartmouth College. The distance to be travelled from Dover was one hundred and thirty miles, which occupied nearly six days. He left home on Thursday, August 18th, at six o'clock in the morning. The first day's ride was enlivened by such companions as chance threw in his way; the second day he joined several gentlemen who had the same object in view; and before they reached their destination, the party consisted of eight or ten, who at Lime were joined by a number of gentlemen from the College, to which they rode through the rain, and arrived about two in the afternoon of Tuesday the 23d. The intervening Sabbath was passed at Plymouth, and Mr. Belknap's journal says :

“By invitation from Mr. Ward, the minister, I preached. The congregation was considerably large and very attentive ; the meeting-house small, but well-contrived. Mr. Ward informs me the church consists of forty members, has two ruling elders and two deacons. There have been two seasons of religious impression among them, one about four, and the other five years ago, when divers were added to the church. The way of admitting members is by relation ; the practice of owning the covenant is laid aside. Mr. Ward appears to be, and bears the character of, a very pious, meek, and charitable man. He has eleven children.”

The following account of his visit is transcribed from the same journal, which gives curious but interesting details of the early condition of this literary institution :

“Dined with the President (Eleazer Wheelock), who appeared somewhat disappointed at the Governor’s not coming. After dinner, walked down to Connecticut river opposite to the college, where is a ferry, — observed on a tree where the bark was cut off, the figure of an Indian painted, which was done by one of the Indian scholars.

“At evening prayers, by the President’s desire, I preached a sermon in the college hall ; — supped and lodged at the President’s. In the evening, the front of the college was illuminated,

“ The plain where the college stands is large and pleasant, and the land good. The college is about seventy or eighty feet long and thirty broad, containing twenty chambers. The hall is a distinct building, which also serves for a meeting-house ; and the kitchen is in one end of it. The President’s house stands on a rising ground east of the college ; and to the north of this is the place proposed to build the new college, near a quarry of grey stone, which is intended for the material of the building. There is another quarry much larger, about three quarters of a mile distant. The tutors are Messrs. Woodward, Ripley, Wheelock, and Smith ; the two former are married to the President’s daughters. Several tradesmen and taverners are settled round the college, in good buildings, which gives the place the appearance of a village.

“ Wednesday, Aug. 24th.—Walked to the mills, about a mile distant. Here are a saw and grist-mill, and a house in which six scholars reside, who take the mills to the halves, and live a kind of philosophic, laborious life : they maintain themselves by their labor. Their house, which is entirely of their own construction, is a curiosity. It consists of one room and one chamber, the stairs outside. The chamber is arched with boards, for the better sound of the voice in singing. The chairs and tables are contrived in an odd manner, and they have a wooden clock. At the door is an upright

pipe, with a spout like a pump, which is continually running with brook water, conveyed down a covered descent; so that they have only to hold a vessel under it, and it is immediately filled. They have a neat poultry house, built of sawed strips of wood, in the form of a cob-house, with four apartments.

“I went round and visited all the Indian scholars, most of whom could speak good English; one little boy was so shy that he would not be seen. Here is a likely ingenious Frenchman, Joseph Marie Verrueil, who came hither of his own accord, and, being taught to read the Bible and judge for himself, has now become a thorough Protestant.

“The President appears to be much affected with the reports that are circulated concerning the badness of the provisions, on which account some have left the college. Last evening he entered into a large and warm vindication of himself, declaring that the reports are ALL FALSE, and that he did not doubt but ‘God would bring forth his righteousness as the light, and his judgment as the noon-day.’ He has had the mortification to lose two cows, and the rest were greatly hurt by a contagious distemper, so that they *could not have a full supply of milk*; and once the pickle leaked out of the beef barrel, so that the *meat was not sweet*. He had also been ill-used with respect to the purchase of some wheat, so that they had smutty bread for a while, &c. The scholars, on the other hand, say

they scarce ever have any thing but pork and greens, without vinegar, and pork and potatoes ; that fresh meat comes but very seldom, and that the victuals are very badly dressed. The trustees have drawn up something of a vindication, after a full inquiry into this matter.

“ I observed, in the President’s prayers, such expressions as these ; speaking of this institution, ‘ Thou thyself hast founded it, Thou hast preserved and supported it, when its beginnings were small, and in the opinion of many contemptible, and thy gentleness hath made it great.’ There seems to be also too much said in the exercises concerning its *enemies* ; and the college is constantly spoken of as in a state of victory over them, which serves to keep alive a spirit that I think ought to be discouraged.

“ About eleven o’clock, the commencement began in a large tent erected on the east side of the college, and covered with boards ; scaffolds and seats being prepared.

“ The President began with a prayer in the usual *strain*. Then an English oration was spoken by one of the Bachelors, complimenting the trustees, &c. A syllogistic disputation on this question ; *Amicitia vera non est absque amore divina*. Then a cliosophic oration. Then an anthem, ‘ The voice of my beloved sounds,’ &c. Then a forensic dispute — *Whether Christ died for all men?* which was well supported on both sides. Then an anthem, ‘ Lift up your heads, O ye gates,’ &c.



“ The company were invited to dine at the President’s and the hall. The Connecticut lads and lasses, I observed, walked about hand in hand in procession, as ’t is said they go to a wedding.

“ Afternoon. The exercises began with a Latin oration on the state of society, by Mr. Ripley. Then an English *Oration on the imitative arts*, by Mr. J. Wheelock. The degrees were then conferred ; and, in addition to the usual ceremony of the book, diplomas were delivered to the candidates, with this form of words : ‘ Admitto vos ad primum (vel secundum) gradum in artibus pro more Academiarum in Anglia, vobisque trado hunc librum, una cum potestate publice prelegendi ubicunque ad hoc munus advocati fueritis, (to the masters was added, fuistis vel fueritis) cujus rei hæc diploma membrana scripta est testimonium.’ Mr. Woodward stood by the President, and held the book and parchments, delivering and exchanging them as need required. Rev. Mr. Benjamin Pomeroy, of Hebron, was admitted to the degree of Doctor in Divinity.

“ After this, McGregore and Swetland, two Bachelors, spoke a dialogue of Lord Lyttleton’s between Apicius and Darteneuf, upon good eating and drinking. The Mercury (who comes in at the close of the piece) performed his part but clumsily ; but the two epicures did well, and the President laughed as heartily as the rest of the audience ; though, considering the circumstances, it might admit of some



doubt, whether the dialogue were really a burlesque, or a compliment to the college.

“An anthem and prayer concluded the public exercises. Much decency and regularity were observable through the day, in the numerous attending concourse of people.

“There is a very fine brass horizontal dial, fixed on a post in the President’s yard ; it was given by Capt. Holland ; it cost ten guineas. The latitude of the place is  $43^{\circ} 38' N$ .

“I saw the hut where the President first lived ; it is a log-house, about twenty feet square, but will soon rot, it being built mostly of beech sticks. This is called the ‘first sprout of the college.’ The scholars built huts round it to live in. It is really surprising to observe the improvements that have been made in four years.

“The college library is kept at Mr. Woodward’s. It is not large, but there are some very good books in it ; the seal is also kept there. They have two good globes of eighteen inches, and a good solar microscope.

“Thursday, August 25th. The trustees were upon business all day. Colonel Phillips gave six hundred pounds for Christianizing the Indians.

“I attended, with several others, the examination of Joseph Johnson, an Indian, educated in this school, who, with the rest of the New England Indians, are about moving up into the country of the

Six Nations, where they have a tract of land fifteen miles square given them. He appeared to be an ingenious, sensible, serious young man ; and we gave him an *approbamus*, of which there is a copy on the next page. After which, at three P.M. he preached in the college hall, and a collection of twenty-seven dollars and a half was made for him. The auditors were agreeably entertained.

“The *approbamus* is as follows :

“These may certify all whom it may concern, that Joseph Johnson, an Indian of the Mohegan tribe, in Connecticut, has offered himself before us, who were providentially together, for examination as a candidate to preach the Gospel, with a principal view to the benefit of his own nation. We have examined him as to his knowledge and understanding in the doctrines of the Gospel and experimental religion, and other accomplishments needful for his usefulness among his own nation, and also the churches in a Christian land, where in Providence he may be called and have opportunity to preach. We are well satisfied as to his qualifications, and heartily recommend him for said purpose.

LEMUEL HEDGE, of Warwick.

JEREMY BELKNAP, Dover.

JOSIAH DANA, Lebanon.

WILLAM CONANT, Lime.

SILVANUS RIPLEY, Tutor of Dartmouth College.

“Dartmouth College, in New Hampshire, Aug. 25th, 1774.”

The next morning, Mr. Belknap commenced the journey home. The Sabbath was passed at Keene, where he says :

“By desire of Mr. Jones, who is preaching here, I preached. The congregation pretty large and very attentive. Two prisoners in chains attended meeting ; they are here under confinement for murder.

“Mr. Blake, at whose house I kept, was taken from here by the Indians, in 1746 or 7, and kept two years. Much mischief has been formerly done here by them. It was formerly called Upper Ashuelot.

“Wednesday, August 31st. Got home, and found all well there.”

On the ride up, one of his companions for a time was Colonel William Stark, brother to General Stark. While riding through Romney, he narrated to Mr. Belknap the story of their surprise by the Indians, when hunting there in 1752, which is detailed in the Life of General Stark, in “Sparks’s American Biography.” On his return, Colonel Phillips, of Exeter, was in company with him, the founder of Phillips’s Academy at that place, and a man of rare benevolence, which the following incident will serve to illustrate.

In 1776, when the war troubles were severely felt in Boston, a grandson of Dr. Sewall, who had

been maintained in Harvard College for three years and a half by the charity of friends in that city, was left without resources by the dispersion of his benefactors, which rendered it impossible to collect their subscription money. Mr. Belknap was interested in him, not only as a worthy youth, of excellent abilities, whom a liberal education would render a valuable member of society, but also as the grandson of the religious teacher and friend of his own childhood, whose memory he fondly cherished. Accordingly, he wrote letters to several clergymen, asking them to interest their "wealthy and generous friends" in the matter. One letter was addressed to the Reverend Mr. Rogers, of Exeter, and occasioned the following correspondence with Colonel Phillips :

"Exeter, 23d March, 1776.

"REV. SIR,

"The Rev. Mr. Rogers has made me acquainted with the (even) necessitous circumstances of a grandson of the venerable and truly pious Dr. Sewall, of blessed memory.

"You are pleased, dear sir, to interest yourself in his behalf, and by this mean I come to share the sacred pleasure with you. My love to the good doctor and his church, afflicted and scattered abroad, and of consequence less able to afford relief in this case, induces me very eagerly to embrace

such an opportunity of expressing a most cordial affection for one whom the good people of Boston, of that church in particular, must wish well to ; and, as I trust it is a service acceptable to God, how happy am I, and how thankful ought I to be !

“ I now send you fifty pounds, hoping, if after the frugal expenditure thereof, there should be occasion for more, you will be pleased to give yourself the trouble — no ! the pleasure — of letting me know what further sum would be serviceable.

“ I am, with respect, yours affectionately,  
“ JOHN PHILLIPS.”

Mr. Belknap replied as follows :

“ To John Phillips, Esq., Exeter.

“ March 25th, 1776.

“ WORTHY SIR,

“ Not only the generous donation which you have been pleased to make toward the education of a much esteemed youth, but the obliging manner in which it is conveyed, demands my thankful acknowledgments to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, that he has blessed you with such ability and inclination to be rich in good works. I thank you also, dear sir, for the honor you have done me, in passing it through my hands, and that you have thereby increased the ‘ sacred pleasure ’ I feel, in being anywise instrumental to promote the comfort and usefulness of a descendant of that excellent person whose memory you so justly revere. The



assistance you have hereby afforded him is so liberal, as, I imagine, will supersede the necessity of any farther application; but should that necessity appear, I shall take the liberty you give me of mentioning it to you.

“I am, Sir, with the greatest respect, your much obliged and very humble servant, “J. B.

In June, 1774, during the excitement occasioned by the Boston Port Act, the town of Portsmouth chose a committee of correspondence, who sent a circular letter to all the towns of the province, and the form of a covenant, to be signed by all adult persons of both sexes, to the end that no more goods might be imported from Great Britain. The subsequent general agreement to that effect is matter of history; but this was a private and premature attempt, and was looked upon by Mr. Belknap as highly improper and assuming, and he refused to sign the covenant.

He said tyranny in one shape was as odious as tyranny in another, and that this attempt of a few unauthorized individuals to impose their opinions upon other people, under penalty of being considered enemies of the common safety, was as dangerous in its tendency as any acts of the British Parliament it was intended to oppose, and unworthy the descendants of men who had fled to this country to avoid similar impositions in England. That it was



very oppressive and unjust to the merchants, who had ordered their goods, and would not have time to countermand them ; and that it would create hatred and ill will in the community, as those who did not sign the covenant would be looked upon as enemies to their fellow-citizens, merely because they differed in opinion on a point of a political nature, which ought not to produce any such effect. That such a measure concerned all the colonies ; and for one or two to come forward without the prospect of being supported by the rest, was to rush upon their own ruin. The result of the matter was, that the selectmen and committee of correspondence in Dover met, and agreed to wait the decision of the approaching Congress upon the subject.

The neighboring provinces were not slow to aid suffering Massachusetts, and provisions and other necessaries were sent to Boston for the poor. To assist in promoting this work, Mr. Belknap wrote an address to the people of New Hampshire, on the Boston Port Act, which shows that the character of that city for benevolence was even then of long standing. It has since been well sustained.

“ To the inhabitants of the province of New Hampshire.

“ Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them, and them that suffer adversity as being yourselves also in the body.

“MY DEAR BRETHREN,

“Our late house of Deputies, which met at Exeter, having recommended it to the several towns in this province to consider the distressed situation of our poor oppressed brethren in Boston, who are suffering the rigor of a cruel and unjust act of parliament which deprives them of the means of subsistence for an indefinite time, and lend them what help we can afford to support them in their sufferings; I beg leave to lay before you some considerations, which may serve to show you, not how much they *need*, for that your own humanity must inform you, but how much they deserve your assistance.

“The people of that town and colony have ever been remarkable for their humanity and generosity to the distressed. Their bounty has been extended to Jamaica, Nevis, Carolina, and other places which have suffered by fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, and other calamities; yea, London itself has experienced their kindness, when, by the fire in 1666, great numbers there were reduced to poverty.

“To their tender and benevolent hand *this province* in particular is greatly indebted, if not for its existence, yet certainly for its protection and support, both in matters of civil government, and in the furious Indian wars during those forty years we were united to that colony. The settlement here must have been broken up, had we been left to stand alone, vexed as we were by intestine divisions and

the want of an orderly government, laboring under poverty, and attacked by a savage enemy, whose tender mercies were cruelty. The sense of their kindness was most gratefully expressed in a letter written by President Cutts and his council, in 1680, to that colony, upon the separation which then took place by the king's authority. And since that time, every one that is acquainted with the state of this province knows, that it owes much of its importance to the neighborhood of the Massachusetts government.

“ Though the people of Boston have themselves suffered greatly by fires, and by the frequent spreading of the small pox among them, yet they have always been at a prodigious expense in supporting the poor, most of whom are not natives of the place, but strangers who have fallen in among them. For several years past, as I have it from the best authority, their annual poor's bill has amounted to about two thousand pounds sterling ; besides which, there is a voluntary quarterly contribution for the poor at a public evening lecture in Faneuil Hall.

“ Distressed persons of all sorts have ever found Boston the best place to go to for relief and assistance. Prisoners of war have found there the kindest treatment, and returned captives have been received with the tenderest commiseration. Mr. Williams, of Deerfield, in the narrative of his captivity, bears them this testimony : “ The charity of

the whole country of Canada, though moved with the doctrine of merits, does not come up to the charity of Boston alone, where notions of merit are rejected."

"Now shall such a people as this suffer unpitied, unassisted? He who hath established this rule, 'The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand,' has disposed the hearts of our brethren in the southern colonies to contribute handsomely already; and, when the crops come in, we expect they will do much more. And shall not we, though our ability is but small in proportion to theirs, do what we can to enable our brethren who are foremost in the conflict, to maintain the cause in which they are engaged by a firm and manly perseverance? Will not such communications of charity strengthen the bonds of society, and endear us to each other? And when a firm union is thus cemented, happy in our mutual affection, in the increased cultivation of our lands, in our frugality and economy, we shall securely bid defiance to all the enemies of our peace, and leave this land of *liberty* a sacred legacy to our posterity.

'Terra potens armis, atque ubere glebæ.'

"AMICUS PATRIÆ."

The conclusion of the above piece shows the writer to have been a true 'son of liberty.' It was published in the New Hampshire Gazette, and was

followed by a notification to convene in town meeting, to grant relief to the poor in Boston. At the time of its publication, the town-clerk of Boston was in Dover; and the governor, in one of his letters to Lord Dartmouth on the state of the province, attributed it to him as being a zealous leader of the popular opposition. The letter forms No. 23 of the appendix to the History of New Hampshire, and the mistake is corrected in a note at the bottom of the page, which is as follows :

“The publication here referred to was written by a person whom the governor did not suspect, and the town-clerk knew nothing of it.” Appendix, No. 30, gives the address itself, but with no hint as to the authorship; and were it not for the imperfect manuscript remaining among Mr. Belknap’s papers, the writer would still be unknown.

Governor Gage had, at this time, a large body of troops in Boston, to the great annoyance of the inhabitants; and more were arriving as the crisis of the controversy between the mother country and the colonies approached. In September, Mr. Belknap wrote an address to the officers, calculated to make them very much ashamed of their position. It was intended for the Massachusetts Spy; where, however, it did not appear. Whether it was printed elsewhere, is not known.



“To the Gentlemen of the Army, now encamped on Boston Common.

“September, 1774.

“Every one who understands the importance of your profession knows it to be noble, generous, and humane ; noble, as it is influenced by the love of glory ; generous, as it disdains the low arts by which superiority may be often gained ; and humane, as it seeks the welfare of mankind. You are justly entitled the guardians of the state, as the design of your equipment is to defend from every hostile attack that system of virtuous liberty which is but another name for the British constitution. Your valor and prudence have been signalized in the greatest dangers, and you were in the road to honor and preferment.

“But, gentlemen, I pity you, — what have you done to deserve such disgrace ? You are sent over into America for the meanest and basest purposes ; to terrify the wretched inhabitants of this oppressed town with the apprehension of being murdered in the streets in some insignificant night-brawl ; and to check that noble spirit which once animated their predecessors to brave every danger, to secure liberty and peace to their posterity, and which still breathes in our present exertions to the same worthy and virtuous purposes.

“Were you employed like the victorious troops under the late illustrious Duke of Cumberland, to



suppress a rebellion excited by the avowed enemies of the British crown,—had you any prospect of meeting an armed foe in the field of battle, and there giving proof of your superior skill and courage, your breasts would glow with martial ardor, and you would have something in view, worthy the dignity and design of your noble profession. But, gentlemen, you must be ashamed when you consider that the noblest purpose for which you can be here employed, though you are ever so successful, will not raise your characters above the rank of a constable or a watchman ; you will have nobody to encounter, unless some hairbrained rioters should disturb the silence of the night with their senseless vociferations, and amuse themselves with the rattling of broken windows. The highest manœuvres in which you can then engage will be street firings, and the fiercest opposition you can expect will be the throwing of brickbats, in which exercise the despicable chimney-sweeper, perched on the top of his fuliginous pinnacle, will have a manifest advantage over you.

“ Should you be called to an honorable engagement with an equal or superior number of troops, disciplined like yourselves, and any of you be slain in the battle, your names would be enrolled in the annals of fame, like the immortal heroes of *Marathon*, or the noble victims on the plains of *Abraham* ; the glowing canvass would exhibit, and the immortal bard sing, your deathless actions to future genera-

tions. But, alas ! gentlemen, though there be even a MILTIADES or a WOLFE among you, the only honor you can derive from falling in the service on which you are now sent, will be to have it said that you were trampled in a gutter, or scalded with hot water from the ladle of some American Amazon, who may be celebrated in a two-penny ballad, long after your names are forgot.

“Such being the disgraceful service on which you are sent, it will not be strange if your magnanimous breasts glow with resentment at your base employers, and burst in vengeance upon them whenever you have an opportunity to do yourselves justice.

“For ourselves, we fear not their utmost malice ; trusting in the goodness of our cause, and depending that gentlemen of true valor and generosity will scorn to degrade their characters so far as to become instruments of oppression, and lavish those lives, in enslaving their fellow-subjects, which are too precious to be sacrificed but for the love of their country, and the preservation of its dearest interests.”

The following extract from Hume, and Mr. Belknap's observations upon it, give his view of the questions at this time agitating all minds, and rapidly bringing on the revolution.

“Mr. Hume, after giving some account of King

Charles's principles of government (vol. 5, p. 204), says,—‘That these principles were derived from the uniform tenor of the English laws, it would be rash to affirm. The fluctuating nature of the constitution, the impatient humor of the people, and the variety of events, had, no doubt, in different ages produced many exceptions and contradictions. These observations alone may be established on both sides, that the appearances were sufficiently strong in favor of the king, to apologize for his following such maxims, and that public liberty must be so precarious under this exorbitant prerogative, as to render an opposition not only excusable but laudable in the people.’

“Much the same is the case in the controversy between Great Britain and the colonies concerning the right of taxation. There are precedents on both sides, and nothing explicit was ever so determined, as that both sides acquiesced, but different sentiments and practices have prevailed at different times. It is pleaded by the defenders of the present revenue laws, ‘that in every state there must be a supreme power somewhere; and, in the empire of Great Britain, what power can claim or exercise supremacy, but the parliament? However easily we might have allowed this sentiment at a time when the parliament were actually engaged in securing or defending the general interest of the empire against foreign violence, yet our complaisance can-

not lead us to subscribe to it when we see this power becoming a party in a quarrel between one part of the empire and another. 'Tis but begging the question to urge this in the dispute.

“If the principles that brought on the revolution, and established the house of Hanover on the throne, are just, then the supreme power of government lies in the people ; consequently the people of America have a right to say who shall or who shall not govern them ; and if they say that the parliament of Great Britain shall not govern them, then the claim exercised by the parliament is null and void. And though, as in the case of Charles, above mentioned, appearances arising from some former precedents when the constitution was less understood, and not precisely defined, may be sufficiently strong in favor of the parliament to apologize for their making such a claim, yet our public liberty is so precarious under this exorbitant prerogative, that opposition in us ‘is not only excusable, but laudable.’”

Concerning the order passed by the king in council, prohibiting the exportation of gunpowder and warlike stores to America, Mr. Belknap remarks :

“Luxury and effeminacy have always been found the surest means to corrupt and enslave a people, while frugality and hardiness have always been favorable to liberty. Our taskmasters, it seems, are trying to reverse this, — they are shutting up our

ports and ruining our trade, thereby stopping the sources of wealth, and consequently of luxury and effeminacy, and driving us into measures of frugality, economy, industry, and invention (for necessity is the mother of invention), and all this with a view of enslaving us. Admirable politicians! If the event proves contrary to their expectations, they will have high reason to compliment their own sagacity! May the councils of these Achitofels be turned into foolishness!"

The above is taken from a commonplace book, containing notices of events occurring in 1774, and some years after, from which the following extracts may be interesting, as illustrating what is already publicly known.

The feelings of the people, in the spring of 1775, varied with the varying news from England; and the proposal of Lord North, which was carried in parliament, that if any colony, by their *Governor, Council, and Assembly*, would engage to make provision for the support of civil government, and the defence, &c., the tax acts should be suspended with regard to them, but the troops to remain, and the refractory colonies to be punished,—this was called joyful news; "but," says Mr. Belknap, "for my part, I conceive it is nothing but a bait thrown out to divide us, and make us desert the Massachusetts government, who cannot comply with the proposal,



without submitting to the alteration of their government, and acting with their new council.”

This state of suspense did not long continue ; the battle of Lexington putting an end to all conciliatory measures.

The tories in Boston had constantly assured General Gage, that the country people would never dare to face his troops, and he had been blamed in parliament for doing nothing.

On the 18th of April, he issued writs for calling an assembly, to see if the people would join with the governor and council, in complying with the terms of Lord North’s proposal : it was to meet on the 31st, and he was persuaded to believe, that if he should strike a bold stroke, and destroy the magazine at Concord, it would so intimidate the people and unfit them for defence, that they would easily be induced to accept the terms. “ The ill success of the expedition fully demonstrated the falsehood of what he had been made to believe, and effectually taught him that this people were not to be so easily frightened as he imagined.”

The tidings of the breaking-out of hostilities reached Mr. Belknap, when he was at the ferry, midway between Dover and Portsmouth ; and he went directly to Boston, to provide for the safety of his parents, leaving the following note for his wife :



At Mr. Knight's, 9 H<sup>o</sup>.

“MY DEAR,

“Before you receive this, you will hear the awful news by the Express I met just now at the ferry, of the devastation the troops have made at Concord, and the commencement of a civil war; which makes it absolutely necessary that I should proceed immediately to Boston (if it is not in ashes before I get there). I shall try to get a chaise at Greenland. As necessity has no laws, the people must excuse my absence next Sabbath, if I should not return before it.

“Your affectionate husband,

“J. B.

“N.B. The Dragoons have arrived at Boston.”

From Cambridge he wrote again as follows :

“Cambridge, Lord's Day morning, April 23, 1775.

“MY DEAR,

“I am arrived here, but cannot hear any news of my parents since this day week, when they were in Boston, where I suppose they are now, and must partake of the fate of the place. I think it best, and am advised by Dr. Langdon, to tarry in some of the neighboring towns a few days longer to see whether any way is opened for their escape. It is talked that an assault will be made upon the entrenchments at the Neck, by pressing large bundles

of wet-screwed hay forward to shelter our men from the cannon-balls. Dr. Warren, who is one of the *Committee of Safety*, told me the town must be cleared, and would be soon. General Gage has made such a proposal to the Bostonians as the Romans to the Carthaginians, that if they would deliver up their arms they should be safe. But they were not such fools as to comply. \* \* \* \*

“The army here is pretty well regulated. \* \* \* Don’t let my gun and ammunition get out of the house, if you can help it. \* \* The posts are stopt, and the mails opened by the Committee of War sitting here, so ’t is in vain to write by post.

“Don’t be frightened at my situation, for well am I guarded by at least ten thousand men. There are here more men than they want. You will doubtless have many false alarms. The tories have given out that they would keep us in alarm all about the country, to divert and distract us. I have been in two already ; one at Newbury, and another at Malden. Couriers are established between here and Newbury ; it would be well if our people took some care of that kind.

“I add no more, but that all our trust and confidence must be in God, and not in an arm of flesh.

“Yours affectionately,

“J. B.”

He remained at Cambridge several days, finding communication with the town difficult. The removal of his parents was finally accomplished, and they went to Dover, where they passed the remainder of their lives. His mother, whose domestic qualities and kindly affectionate character won the regard of all who knew her, died in 1784 ; her death was recorded by Mr. Belknap, in the Almanac for that year, in these words :

“ Oct. 12th. *My mother died* this morning, as the sun was rising, aged 69.”

His pious and much honored father died the 30th August, 1797, aged 81. They are buried near each other, in the town burial ground on Pine Hill, Dover.

In July, Mr. Belknap was chosen by the committee of safety of New Hampshire, chaplain to their troops at Cambridge ; a service upon which he declined entering, but expressed his willingness to do his part towards supplying the army by preaching in turn with the other clergymen of the province, if such a plan should be adopted. The care of his people, his family, and his own precarious health, united in obliging him to decline the honor of a permanent residence there in that character.

In October he visited the camp at Cambridge. The following extracts are from a journal of occurrences and observations during his stay :

“ Oct. 19th. It being foul weather, I was hindered from taking a view of the lines ; visited several friends, and rode to Roxbury ; lodged at Mr. Robert Pierpoint’s, where General Ward resides. In conversation with Mr. Joshua Ward, aid-de-camp to the General, I found that the plan of *independence* was become a favorite point in the army, and that it was offensive to pray for the king ; that the Continental Congress had prepared a *league offensive and defensive* between the several colonies, which was to take place if the king should reject the continental petition. In this league it is stipulated that each colony shall have such a form of government as they shall choose, and that an annual Congress of the whole continent shall assemble by turns in each colony, so that they may be the better acquainted with one another, and the people with them.

“ Oct. 20th. By desire of Mr. Mansfield, the chaplain, I prayed with General Thomas’s regiment, quartered at Roxbury, and afterward visited the lines in company with an officer of the picquet guard. Nothing struck me with more horror, than the present condition of Roxbury : that once busy, crowded street is now occupied only by a picquet guard. The houses are deserted, the windows taken out, and many shot-holes visible ; some have been burnt, and others pulled down, to make room for the fortifications. A wall of earth is carried across the street to

Williams' old house, where there is a formidable fort mounted with cannon. The lower line is just below where the George Tavern stood ; a row of trees, root and branch, lies across the road there, and the breastwork extends to Lamb's Dam, which makes a part thereof. I went round the whole, and was so near the enemy as to see them (though it was foggy and rainy) relieve their sentries, which they do every hour. Their outmost sentries are posted at the chimneys of Brown's house.

“After dining with General Ward, I returned to Cambridge ; in the evening, visited and conversed with General Putnam. Ward appears to be a calm, cool, thoughtful man ; Putnam, a rough, fiery genius.

“In conversation with Mr. Ward at Roxbury, I learned that the reason of our throwing up the intrenchment at Charlestown, on the night of the 16th June, was, that there had been intelligence received, such as could be depended on, that the regulars had determined to make a push for Cambridge after the arrival of their three generals and reinforcements, who landed a few days before. That Dr. Warren was the last man in the trenches after they were forced, and died on the breastwork, with his sword in his hand. That his body was stripped naked, and buried so ; his coat was sold in Boston by a soldier for eight dollars. His body was dug up several times, and buried again, to gratify the



curiosity of those who came to see it. That divers persons were permitted to go from Boston over to Charlestown to view the field of battle.

“ Oct. 21st. Detained at Cambridge all day by the rain. Met General Sullivan, who told me he was ordered to Portsmouth on the report of the destruction of Falmouth, and that General Lee was ordered to Rhode Island, to defend them. Dined, by invitation, with Mr. Mifflin, Quarter-master-General. The company present were Dr. Franklin, Mr. Lynch, of Carolina, and Colonel Harrison, of Virginia (a committee from the Congress, to settle a plan with the generals for a new army, to be kept up till December, 1776); General Lee, Adjutant-General Gates, Colonel Reed and Mr. Baylor, aide-camps to General Washington, Lieutenant-Governor Griswold, and Judge Wells of Connecticut, and Mr. Leonard, chaplain.

“ General Lee is a perfect original, a good scholar and soldier, and an odd genius, full of fire and passion, and but little good manners; a great sloven, wretchedly profane, and a great admirer of dogs, of which he had two at dinner with him, one of them a native of Pomerania, which I should have taken for a bear, had I seen him in the woods. A letter which he wrote General Putnam yesterday, is a copy of his odd mind. It is, as nearly as I can recollect, as follows, being a letter of introduction of one Page, a church clergyman :



"Hobgoblin Hall, October 19th, 1775.

"DEAR GENERAL,

"Mr. Page, the bearer of this, is a Mr. Page. He has the laudable ambition of seeing the great General Putnam. I therefore desire you would array yourself in all your majesty and terrors, for his reception. Your blue and gold must be mounted, your pistols stuck in your girdle, and it would not be amiss if you should black one half of your face.

"I am, dear General, with fear and trembling,

Your humble servant,

"CHARLES LEE."

The following account of the death of this eccentric general, in Philadelphia, Oct. 2d, 1782, was communicated to Mr. Belknap, by Dr. Clarkson of that city :

"General Lee died in the second story of a tavern, after a few days' illness, in some degree his own physician, and but badly attended, except by two faithful dogs, who frequently attempted in vain to awaken their dead master. They laid themselves down by his corpse for a considerable time ; so long, that it became necessary for new masters to remove them. He lies buried in Christ's Church Yard : no stone marks his bed. Indeed those who saw his open grave can scarcely show the site, as it is con-

tinually trodden by persons going into and coming out of church. Behold the honor of the great !”

“This Page is suspected by some to be a spy, as he has a plan of the lines, and is bound to England. At table, the chief talk was about the best men for soldiers. General Lee said the Portuguese had the best materials for soldiers, if they were well disciplined ; but that the Turks of Asia Minor were the stoutest men in the world. Adjutant-General Gates, who is an experienced officer, said he never desired to see better soldiers than the New England men made. All joined in execrating the Irish. Many of the riflemen are of this nation, who are continually deserting to the enemy. *Lynch, Harrison, and Wells, wished to see Boston in flames.* Lee told them it was impossible to burn it, unless they sent men in with bundles of straw at their backs to do it. He said it could not be done with carcasses and hot shot ; and instanced in Isle Royal, in St. Lawrence River, which was fired at in 1760, a long time with a fine train of artillery, hot shot, and carcasses, without effect.

“General Washington was to have been at this dinner ; but the weather prevented. He is said to be a very amiable gentleman ; cool, sensible, and placid, and a resolute soldier. I had no opportunity to see him.

“Oct. 22d. Preached all day in the meeting-house ; after meeting, I was again told by the chaplain that

it was disagreeable to the generals to pray for the king. I answered, that the same authority which appointed the generals had ordered the king to be prayed for at the late Continental fast ; and, till that was revoked, I should think it my duty to do it. Dr. Appleton prayed in the afternoon, and mentioned the king with much affection. It is too assuming in the generals to find fault with it.

“Oct. 23d. Mr. Mifflin assured me, there was no design to make an assault upon Boston very soon, and that it would not be done unless it was found that nothing else could be done. Flat-bottomed boats are preparing, which will carry sixty or seventy men at once. Barracks are also building for the army's winter quarters. The army is healthy, and well supplied. I visited the works at Prospect Hill. The weather being hazy, I had not so good a view as I should wish ; but I could see the enemy's lines and buildings at Bunker Hill, and the desolation at Charlestown. Visited also the works at Plowed Hill and Winter Hill, and set out on my return ; at night got to Haverhill, where the rains had caused a great flood, in Merrimac river ; vast quantities of wood floated down, which was eagerly seized by the people along shore.

“Oct. 24th. Got home, and found the town full of Portsmouth people, who have been moving, with their effects, ever since the destruction of Falmouth, apprehending the same fate.”

The uncle of Mrs. Belknap, Doctor Andrew Eliot, pastor of the New North Church in Boston, sending his wife and daughters to Fairfield, where one of his sons was settled, remained in Boston himself through the siege, from a sense of duty to his people. Some extracts from his letters to Mr. Belknap, during this period, afford an interesting example of the steadfast faith and fervent piety which made the oppressed strong against the tyrants so vastly superior to them in wealth and power. The son here mentioned was the Rev. John Eliot, who, obliged to leave college on account of the disturbances, had gone to Dover to keep school, and was living with Mr. Belknap.

“ Boston, June 5th, 1775.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I just received a letter from my son, wherein he informs me of your very great kindness to him. It gave me unspeakable pleasure to find you had not forgotten him, as from some circumstances I thought you had ; but I freely own, I ought not to have entertained the least suspicion of one of whose benevolence I had so much experience, both to me and mine ; but what gave me the greatest pleasure was, that he would have your advice, direction, and assistance, at a time when he greatly needs it, and is deprived of the help of his father. You will advise him \* \* \* \* In short, my dear sir,

you must be a father to him, and do with him as if he were your own son. I commit him to God and to you. Whether I shall ever have it in my power to make you amends is uncertain; at present, I am in a melancholy situation, and yet dare not leave it. I have a larger congregation than when I had only my own people; and how can I go away, and leave them without ordinances? My heart recoils at the thought; and yet to tarry here long, will overwhelm me. I desire to do that which will be most agreeable to the will of God. Let me have your prayers: I doubt not your tender sympathy. I have very comfortable news from my son at Fairfield. \* \* \* You see I have my mercies amidst all my trials, and I esteem it no small favor that John will be with you. Blessed be God, I can leave myself and mine with him. What will be the end of these difficulties between Great Britain and the colonies, God only knows. It is a dark day we live in; but Infinite Wisdom directs all. I doubt not you will rejoice with me, in the thought of the divine government, all will end well.

“Could you see Boston, it would break your heart. God will revive it, and make it a quiet habitation. This is the fixed belief of your affectionate

“Friend and humble servant,

“ANDREW ELIOT.”



"August 3d.

\* \* \* "I can do but little for God and his people, but hope my tarrying here has been of use. I am continually employed in visiting the sick, who are numerous; in attending the prisoners, though it has not been thought proper I should see them of late. \* \* \* My situation is difficult enough; but my God strengthens me. Things will, I am persuaded, issue well in God's time and way. I leave all with him. 'Tis a comfort that the gospel opens to us prospects far superior to any this world can yield.

"November 19th.

"I have no hope of leaving town this winter. God knows whether I shall survive the difficulties I am called to go through. *You cannot conceive the anxiety I am in. Nothing but the religion of Jesus Christ could support me.* Whatever I meet with, nothing will erase till death the affectionate regard which is due to you from your grateful and affectionate friend."

"Boston, March 26th, 1776.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have only time to write very briefly, in answer to your kind letter. Through the goodness of God, I am well, but have endured much. I have not received any remarkable insults from our late despots. I kept as much as possible out of their



way. I hope the manuscripts in the Old South steeple are not meddled with. Dr. Byles is well; he removed a few nights, I am told, during the cannonade, by which he was endangered: I have not seen him since. It is surprising no one was killed, and only a boy hurt of the inhabitants, by all the shells and shot thrown in upon us of late. \* \* \*

“The British troops are not all gone from Nantasket; some departed to-day. I never expect to see them or any other British soldiers in Boston.

“God hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. God grant we may never forget his works.

“My regards to your dear wife, your parents, and all friends. I have much to write, but have time only to add that I am,

“Yours affectionately,

“A. ELIOT.”

“I am told the province records are carried off, probably the Probate, I believe no other.”

Dr. Eliot died in September, 1778, and was succeeded in his pastoral office by his son, Dr. John Eliot.

## CHAPTER IV.

1782—1786.

*Condition of the Family. — Journey to White Hills.  
— Election Sermon. — Journey to Philadelphia.  
— Parish Difficulties. — He leaves Dover. — Letter to President Willard. — Various Proposals of Friends. — Letter from Exeter.*

IN the autumn of 1783, Mr. Belknap sent his eldest son, Joseph, then nearly fourteen years old, to Philadelphia, where he was bound as an apprentice to Mr. Aitken, printer. The following summer, the second son, Samuel, went to Boston to live with his uncle, Mr. Samuel Eliot, who was an importer of British goods. The other children, four in number, two sons and two daughters, remained at home.

In July, 1784, was accomplished the tour to the White Mountains, an account of which is given in the third volume of the History of New Hampshire, without any intimation, however, that the author of it was one of the company of gentlemen there mentioned.

There were seven gentlemen in the party, three of whom were clergymen. On Tuesday, July 20th, they left Dover, and on Friday night they encamped at the foot of the mountains. The next morning the ascent was attempted. Dr. Fisher, of Beverly,

at the first steep ascent found himself disabled by a pain in the side, and turned back. Mr. Belknap's breath failed him after two hours' hard climbing; and, upon a consultation, he decided to return to the camp alone. The rest of the party succeeded in gaining the summit of Mount Washington; but the view was obscured by clouds, and they were obliged to pass the night upon the mountains, a fire they kindled being their only defence against the rain.

An extract from Mr. Belknap's journal of this tour, says:

“As we passed through Eaton and Conway, the appearance of so many persons, more than ever had been seen travelling that way, was very amusing to the people. We had three guns and one pair of pistols in the company, the barometers were slung across the back of one, and the sextant was carried in a large bag. This uncommon appearance was the subject of much speculation; and the good women, understanding there were three ministers in the company, were in hopes we should *lay the spirits* which have been supposed to hover about the White Mountains,—an opinion very probably derived from the Indians, who thought these mountains the habitation of some invisible beings, and never attempted to ascend them.

“Tuesday, July 27th. This afternoon a thunder shower. The people of this place—called Mr. Whipple's plantation, who are five or six families

— assembled in Mr. Whipple's barn, and I preached them a sermon, the first ever preached here, from 1st Corinthians, vi. 19, 20 :

“ ‘ What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own ?

“ ‘ For ye are bought with a price : therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.’

“ Mr. Little, of Wells, baptised eight of their children. Mr. Cutler, of Ipswich, made the concluding prayer. Thirty-eight people of the place were present, and seemed pleased with the attention paid them.”

Dr. Fisher was left behind at the Notch, to collect birds and other animal and vegetable productions ; and the rest of the party returned home. Mr. Belknap reached Dover on Saturday evening, July 31st.

On June 2d, 1785, by appointment of the General Court of New Hampshire, Mr. Belknap preached the Election Sermon. The next day a committee was appointed to thank him for his “ ingenious discourse,” and request a copy for the press.

The text was Psalm cxliv. 11, 15, and the subject, the true interest of the State, and the best means of promoting its prosperity ; namely, the education of youth, the improvement of the country, peace, and religion.

“What will become of your republican governments,” he says, “if they are not nurtured by public education, and strengthened by public virtue? If these points be not attended to, you may expect a domineering aristocracy to succeed your present democratic forms; and what that will degenerate into, let the nature of aspiring ambition, and the histories of fallen republics, tell.”

The improvement of inland navigation and the encouragement of home manufactures are strongly recommended, and also the preservation of peace by every possible method, concerning which, he says :

“It is a melancholy consideration, that one of the most effectual methods to preserve peace is to be prepared for war; but such is the present constitution of things in this unhappy world, and such it will be till the gospel of peace shall so far prevail and extend its influence, as that the nations will either avoid all occasions of controversy, or agree to refer their disputes to some arbitrating power, with a peaceful design to abide its determination. The distant hint of such a proposal does honor to the benevolent heart that conceived it, and will do more honor to the states or nations that shall publicly recommend and adopt it. But at present it seems as if things must go on in their old course. The lust of power has been a ruling passion ever since the days of Nimrod, and there is no effectual way to check it, but by forcible resistance. Convinced



that a nation cannot preserve itself from insult, but by rendering itself formidable, as a lover of peace I must wish to see my country prepared for war ; to see every cannon which now lies carelessly about our streets and wharves, and in our forts, properly secured from decay ; every musket and sword furnished and kept in the nicest order ; our militia officered, instructed, arranged and accoutred, and ready for the field on the shortest notice ; our arsenals and magazines well supplied ; our fortifications repaired and strengthened, and garrisoned at least with invalids. God only knows who our next enemies may be, or how soon we may have occasion for our veteran officers and soldiers, and our foreign friends and allies."

To promote the fourth and last object of national prosperity mentioned above, he recommends a national religion, and then explains his meaning as follows :

"Let no man here take an alarm as if by a national religion I would recommend the establishment of any modes or forms in preference to others. The world has too long been abused with attempts to impose uniformity ; and our constitution has wisely avoided that fatal rock, on which conscience and truth have often suffered shipwreck. By a national religion I would be understood to mean an acknowledgment of the being, perfections, and providence of one Supreme God ; a sense of his moral government,

both in this and a future state ; and a careful observance of the eternal laws of justice, truth and mercy, in all our public conduct. If these principles be admitted into our national councils, and our national character be formed upon them, we may truly be said to have the Lord for our God, however different our speculations or practice may be as individuals or religious societies. These are principles in which honest men of all denominations will agree ; and if, by a strict adherence to them, we acknowledge God in all our public ways, we shall have reason to hope and believe that he will direct our steps."

Other extracts might be made of equal or greater interest ; but the above will show that though so many years have passed since the discourse was delivered, the truths it contains are not obsolete, and the practical application of some of them is equally important to us in our present condition.

On the 17th of September, 1785, Mr. Belknap left home on a journey to Philadelphia ; on the first day, Saturday, proceeding only to Portsmouth, where he remained over the Sabbath. On the 21st he reached Boston, and stopped there for a week, preaching on the 25th at Charlestown. The following letter to his wife gives his prospects as to pursuing his journey :

"Boston, Tuesday, Sept. 27th, 1785.

"MY DEAR WIFE,

"I am disappointed of my intended journey to Providence, by the means of a set of English factors, or something else, who, after I had engaged a passage for myself in the coach, went and hired the whole of it to themselves; and the base fellow of a coachman shut me out. Your brother is vexed on the occasion as much as myself. Another coach is expected in this evening, and I have laid in for a place in it; but as these stages do not go on any fixed day, but only as they find company, I may be detained here till Thursday: however, I have time enough before me, the whole month of October, at the end of which I hope to see you again. I have received fifteen dollars of my Charlestown friends, which has paid my expenses of outset, and leaves me about seventy or eighty dollars for my further expenses. I hope to hear from you when I get to New York, which may be about the beginning of next week."

On Thursday, the 29th, the stage coach was again ready, and Mr. Belknap took a place in it for Providence; the illness of a lady passenger obliged them to pass the night at "Hatch's," in Attleboro', and they reached Providence the next morning. While here, Mr. Belknap endeavored to gain information concerning the early history of the town.

On Sunday, he preached twice for Mr. Hitchcock ; and on Monday, he says : “ Spent the day in searching among some of the ancient people, and those of a literary turn, for some anecdotes of Roger Williams and the old settlers of this place. Darius Sessions, Esq., formerly Governor, informed me that Williams came from Boston to Pawtucket river *in the winter*, and that he passed it above the falls, on the ice, and came to the high plain on the west side of Moshawsick river, from whence he saw the bay, which he was rejoiced to find was an arm of the sea ; that he crossed Moshawsick creek, and on the eastern side found a spring issuing from under the hill ; of this he drank, having been without water for some time before, the streams being frozen ; and observing that God in his providence had taken care for the supply of their wants, gave the place the name of Providence. Governor Bowen’s tradition differs from this only in one particular, namely, that he came down to Pawtucket river in a canoe, and up the stream to Moshawsick, and landed near the said spring. From the nature of the place and the season of the year, I think the former account most probable.

“ Governor Bowen also told me that the last interview which old Roger Williams had with Philip, Sachem of the Wampanoags, was just at the beginning of the troubles in 1675, when Philip with his warriors had been driving cattle from Rehoboth, and

came to the hill opposite Williams's house at Providence. Williams took his staff, and crossed the water at the fording-place (where the mills now stand), to go and expostulate with them. Philip, seeing him, came down the hill to meet him, and forbade his going up, telling him the young Indians would kill him. Williams pressed for leave to go up, but Philip would not permit him; he then expostulated on their warlike appearance, asked if any injustice had been done, and vindicated himself and his neighbors from any blame. Philip answered that his *young men* had grown jealous that the English wanted to dispossess them of the country, and were determined to make a bold push to exterminate them, and that he could not restrain them. He then led the old man back to the water, and stood by to see him safe over; but, before he could ascend the hill to return home, the young Indians fired at him. They then held their feast. Williams never saw Philip after this."

Mr. Belknap obtained, by the kindness of a friend, Governor Hopkins' account of the planting and growth of Providence; and his journal contains the following observation on the principles of its founder:

"Upon the whole, I think that although Roger Williams was right in his idea of *liberty of conscience*, upon which principle the colony of Rhode Island was established, yet there ought to have been



more care taken by the early settlers here for the cultivation of the minds of youth, by erecting and endowing schools and seminaries of learning. In that case, youth, being properly instructed and principled, would have known what *use to make of their liberty*, when they had come to years of understanding; but this early cultivation being wanting, an unlimited liberty of conscience and freedom from the obligation of supporting ministers, has in too many instances produced an unrestrained licentiousness of manners, and a careless disregard of virtue. Massachusetts on one side, and Connecticut on the other, were at the same time very strict in regard to settling ministers, and enforcing the payment of taxes for their support; it may be that the Rhode Island people were fond of showing themselves too much in the other extreme, and were led into more licentiousness by means of these examples."

"Tuesday, Oct. 4th, P. M. There was an incipient meeting of the Rhode Island Association, at Mr. Hitchcock's. Dr. Stiles, Mr. Rogerson, and Ellis of Rehoboth, White of Bristol, and Smith of Dighton, present. In the evening, a lecture, which, after much discussion, fell to my lot by vote to preach. Mr. Ellis prayed, and I preached from Acts xxvi. 28: 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.'"

The next day he sailed in a packet for Newport,

where many sad marks were visible of its late subjection to the British. The public library was pilfered by them of its most valuable books ; the elegant building in which it was deposited also suffered much damage. The meeting-houses were turned into barracks and storehouses, and some elegant buildings burnt or otherwise destroyed.

After many delays, on Monday morning, Oct. 10th, between 8 and 9 o'clock, he landed at Crane Wharf, in the city of New York. Of the passage, the following portion of a letter to his wife gives some account :

" New York, Oct. 11th, 1785.

" MY DEAR WIFE,

" From the letter I wrote while at Providence, you will see that I survived the storm which you mention, being all the time of it at Boston. Several squally days which we have had since, I was either at Providence or Newport, in one and the other of which places I was detained eight days, waiting for a fair wind and a freight of passengers.

" On Friday last we sailed ; but, before we left the harbor, the wind came ahead, and we beat to windward (a species of sailing I never before was acquainted with, and never wish to be again), till we found it impossible to weather Point Judith, and then we returned to port. Saturday morning, with three more passengers, seven in all, we sailed again,

with a fair wind, and had a very pleasant passage up the Sound, in a very swift-sailing sloop, with every desirable accommodation for eating, drinking, and sleeping."

Among the passengers were a newly married pair, on their way to a new settlement, one hundred and thirty miles above New York, towards Albany. The letter continues :

"I am treated here with every possible mark of attention, by Mr. Hazard and his very cheerful and obliging wife. I hope to spend the next Sabbath in Philadelphia. I am sorry our people cannot get a supply of preaching ; but it is impossible for me to return before the end of this month, do the best I can, with the best winds and weather."

Among other items, is this, which still has interest for us :

"At Providence, I met with Dr. Stiles, who introduced me to a very worthy family at Newport, by the name of Channing.

"In short, I have met with as much good company and good treatment as I could possibly wish ; and except the beating to windward, on Friday last, which made me downright sea-sick, I have not had an unpleasant hour since I left home. Adieu, my dear, and believe me your most

"Affectionate friend,

"JERE. BELKNAP.

“ Oct. 12th. A mail in to-day from the eastward, and no letter for me. I go to Philadelphia to-morrow.”

“ Heaven bless you ! ”

The sittings of Congress had been removed from Philadelphia to New York ; and Mr. Belknap gives the following description of the room occupied by them, in the old City Hall, in Wall Street :

“ The chamber where *Congress* sits is ornamented with full-length portraits of the King and Queen of France, in rich frames, covered with a silk curtain : these pictures are highly finished, and were presented by the king to Congress. The President’s seat is a plain arm-chair, on a raised step, under a green canopy. Over his head is a large sun, surrounded by twelve stars ; before him, a desk ; at his right hand, sits the secretary, with a green desk ; several tables serve for the members, who sit in plain, green chairs.

“ Having spent four days at New York with my friend Hazard, who was so kind as to show me all worth seeing in the city, on the afternoon of Thursday, October 13th, I crossed Hudson’s river to Paulet Hook, about sunset, to be ready to go in the *New Flying Diligence* the next morning.

“ Friday, 14th. Between 3 and 4 in the morning, I set off in the stage for Philadelphia. We rode nine miles to Bergen Neck, and then crossed a ferry, which brought us to Woodbridge. Just

before we reached the second ferry, we perceived the dawn of day, and the sun rose when we had ridden two miles from it; so that we had travelled sixteen miles and crossed two ferries before sunrise, and shifted horses twice. The third stage brought us to Brunswick, where we breakfasted. We here crossed the Raritan in a scow, open at both ends, to receive and discharge the carriage without unharnessing or dismounting; and the scow was pulled across the river by a rope. We passed through Princeton about noon, and got to Trenton to dinner; then passed the Delaware in another scow, which was navigated only by setting-poles. We then drove thirty miles over a plain, level country, at a great rate, and arrived at Philadelphia just at sunset, being ninety-six miles. We changed horses seven times in this route, and the carriage four times."

Here his first object was to see his son, who was apprenticed to Mr. Aitken, the printer of the first volume of his History. The meeting is thus described, in a letter to his wife:

"I sent for Josey to the inn where the stage put up, and the dear child was overjoyed, and shed tears at seeing me. They had heard of my arrival at New York, and the family talk had ever since been about me. A lodging was prepared for me at Mr. Aitken's, and I was received with all the cordiality of an intimate friend.



“Saturday, 15th. Attended a famous trial in the State House, where the King of France was plaintiff, and Robert Morris defendant. The jury gave it to the latter. The judges were dressed in scarlet robes, and sat with their hats on. Their names were McKean, Bryan, Atlee, and Rush. The lawyers had black coats, but no gowns.”

On Sunday, Oct. 16th, in the morning, Mr. Belknap “attended divine worship at the Scots Seceders’ Church;” in the afternoon, he preached for “Mr. Duffield, pastor of the old Presbyterian Society;” and, remaining in Philadelphia through the next week, he preached on the next Sabbath for Dr. Ewing and Dr. Sprout, also presbyterian clergymen.

He visited Bishop White, then Dr. White, minister of Christ Church, “an amiable and worthy man,” and saw, likewise, Dr. McGaw, another episcopal clergyman, whom he calls “a sensible, modest, candid man.” The latter informed Mr. Belknap, that the late convention of the episcopal churches in Philadelphia had agreed upon a reform of the liturgy, &c. Mr. Belknap says, “There seems to be a spirit of candor, liberality, and independence, in all their proceedings, which is a good sign of a further reformation.

“The presbyterians, in this part of the country, seem to be forming an union, and laying aside their former distinctions: this is another good sign.

“The many religious distinctions in this place

have, doubtless, some ill effect on the tempers of some of the people ; but there is observable in the greater part that I conversed with, a spirit of candor and benevolence. Persons of various denominations frequently assist each other to build churches and schools. The Quakers are an opulent and independent society ; some of the richest of them ride in coaches and chariots, and their women wear umbrellas ; and some of the younger, hoops and sashes, and gold watches ; others are very plain.”

Of the Philosophical Society, of which he was a member, Mr. Belknap gives the following account, in a letter to a friend :

“ As to the Philosophical Society, it is neglected by most of the members ; scarcely six or eight get together, unless on some extraordinary occasion. One meeting happened while I was there, and I fully expected to attend it ; but though at the appointed hour I was in company with my very worthy friend, Dr. Clarkson, who is a member, and urged him to go, as he had partly engaged before, yet his indifference to the matter prevailed on me to sacrifice my philosophy to friendship, and we spent the evening (as he thought) much more pleasantly. I afterward learned that there were five or six of them together ; and their entertainment was a piece that Dr. Franklin sent them, on a method to make chimneys carry smoke well. As to printing another volume of transactions, their papers have been scattered

and lost in the late war; but it is said they have enough to make another volume, if any body would put it forward. I hope the publication of ours will set them about it; for they will not like to be rivalled by the New Englanders, being already before us in point of improvements of almost every kind, not merely in their own opinions, but in the estimation of some candid countrymen of ours, who have visited them."

On Monday the 24th, he returned to New York. The journey varied from that to Philadelphia, by a sail of fifteen miles, from Elizabethtown Point to New York.

"Wednesday 26th, at half past 2 P. M., set sail in the Polly packet, Godfrey, jun., commander, for Rhode Island. The wind north-west, and a fresh gale, passed Hellgate rapidly, wind and tide in our favor; had a steady fine gale all night, and made a long run; course, east by north. On the morning of Thursday, Oct. 27th, at sunrise, found ourselves between Fisher's Island and Stonington; at quarter before twelve, we landed at Newport; the voyage twenty-one hours only, which is esteemed a very fine one. Dined this day with Mr. William Channing, and lodged at his house, being persuaded to stay here over the Sabbath."

On Sunday, Oct. 30th, Mr. Belknap preached in the morning, for the second congregational church, late Dr. Stiles', then President of Yale College; in

the afternoon for Mr. Hopkins ; and in the evening for Mr. Foster, a Baptist clergyman.

In the course of this journey, Mr. Belknap preached for Presbyterian and Baptist clergymen, as well as for those of his own denomination, Congregationalists. This interchange was customary then, and must have had a beneficial influence in enlarging the views of the different sects, and promoting a spirit of toleration and charity toward one another, of which there is always need in a religious community like ours, where every man is free to do that which is right in his own eyes, and yet, notwithstanding this privilege, is often ready to condemn his neighbor for looking in a different direction.

On Monday, the 31st, he sailed up the bay to Providence ; and on Saturday, November 5th, he reached Dover in safety. His journal concludes with this statement, so satisfactory to the returning traveller, "Found all my family well."

The embarrassment occasioned by the non-payment of his salary grew more and more distressing, and the unwillingness of the parish to do their duty was more and more apparent. In 1774, Mr. Belknap applied to them for a supply of wood, reminding them that he had relieved them from it at the time of his settlement, on account of their aged pastor's requirements. Mr. Cushing died March 25th, 1769, at the advanced age of seventy-nine years ; and the necessity for this application so long after, shows the

disposition of a people from whom there was every reason to expect a contrary course of action. Four years later, in a letter to a friend, which was never sent, he thus describes his position :

“ I scarcely think from what I have experienced, that I shall be able to obtain the necessaries of life another year, without the most strenuous exertions of those who are my friends from principle ; and their influence will not prevail on others to do their duty, so that my support is absolutely become a burden to a people who, I used to think, bore it cheerfully.

“ Was it owing to their poverty, or sufferings in the cause of the country, I could not only bear it patiently, but should think it my duty to partake of their sufferings to the utmost possible degree ; but, the truth is, they have been growing rich on the spoils of their country, and you know the adage, ‘ *Crescit amor nummi quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.*’

“ There are at this day hundreds of bushels of bread-corn withheld for a price. It is with difficulty I can get a supply. I am actually obliged to plant my own bread-corn this year, and expect to handle the hoe as a common laborer, as my wife is forced to do the wheel, to the great injury of her health, and the neglect of the other necessary business of the family ; and my neighbors have their flocks and herds so multiplied, that I cannot even get pasturing for my cows.



“These things are a continual source of vexation both of body and mind ; they take off my attention from my proper business, and unfit me for the duties of my station.”

These troubles kept his mind in perpetual agitation, until the final decision to leave Dover, in September, 1786 ; which was a great relief to himself and his friends, though it threw him upon the world with a family to support, and only his own powers of mind to depend upon for subsistence.

He bore his trials with Christian fortitude. He did not speak harshly of those who had shown themselves so unworthy ; very few of his friends were made acquainted with his difficulties ; and even to his own children, then and in after years, he was always silent on the subject.

A narrative of his efforts during four years to obtain compliance with a contract made by unanimous consent, and of the evasions and procrastinations by which these efforts were defeated, was written by Mr. Belknap, and is still in existence ; but it may be passed over in silence, as it relates to the actions of a generation that sleep with their fathers, and a better instructed people now occupy their places, some of whom have shown a respectful remembrance of his name.

The only contemporary of Mr. Belknap now living, is the venerable Dr. Ezra Green, of Dover, who

was an active member of the parish, and was always his firm friend, and a worthy and honorable man. He is now more than one hundred and one years old, yet still retains his mental faculties, and cherishes the memory of his former pastor.

On dissolving his connection with the Dover parish, Mr. Belknap wrote a letter to President Willard, of Harvard University, of which the following is an imperfect sketch :

“DEAR SIR,

“The kindness which you have shown at several times in inquiring into my circumstances, and offering your assistance in case of need, encourages me to inform you, that, after long waiting on the people of this parish for a just and amicable settlement, and finding no methods practicable to form such an union as would be mutually agreeable, I have now finally quitted them; the relation being dissolved by mutual consent.

“I am now again a candidate for the ministry, and can, if need be, procure sufficient testimonials from the neighboring ministers and other gentlemen. As Providence has placed you in a situation which renders you capable of diffusive benefit to ministers and churches, it may be in your power—I doubt not it is your inclination—to serve me as well as others in my circumstances. I wish to be ser-

viceable to the best interests of mankind, and to be still employed in the vineyard, if the Lord of it shall appoint me a place."

He had no thought of leaving the ministry, holding the opinion that any other occupation would be a descent from that dignified station ; but preached for several months to vacant parishes, where he was invited, obtaining the usual compensation, until he received an acceptable call from a society in Boston, the ensuing winter. During this time, he preached at Exeter, Concord, Beverly, &c., and his friends proposed various plans for his acceptance.

Dr. John Eliot suggested a belles-lettres school in Boston ; the proprietors of the Columbian Magazine, of Philadelphia, offered him one hundred pounds per annum, if he would edit that work ; and Mr. Matthew Carey, who was one of them, offered him twenty guineas for the historical part of an American Annual Register, which he proposed to publish. These proposals did not reach Mr. Belknap, until he was otherwise occupied and engaged.

The first place he went to on leaving Dover was Exeter ; and, while there, the insurrection broke out, of which an account is given in the History of New Hampshire. The following is an extract from a letter written on the spot, at the time of the occurrence of the events which it describes :

“ Exeter, 24th Sept., at night, 1786.

“ The week past has afforded a very busy and important scene here. A party of about two hundred men, headed by the Chairman of a late convention, appeared in arms on the 20th inst., Wednesday last, and beset the house where the general court was sitting, to demand an answer, in half an hour, to a petition which they had before sent, for an emission of paper money. They kept the court prisoners all the afternoon; but, as soon as it grew dark, a few old continental officers, with some others, formed an association, shouted ‘Huzza for government!’ got out an old field piece, and set them scampering over the fences so as to release the members from their confinement. The mob retreated about a mile or two, and passed the night in some houses and barns. In the evening, Gen. Sullivan sent out expresses, and collected the militia and three companies of light horse; early the next morning, he despatched a party of thirty horsemen by a private road, who came on the rear of the insurgents, took possession of a bridge which cut off their retreat, and then advanced with the militia toward the bridge, where thirty-nine of the insurgents were made prisoners, without any other damage than a few slight cuts. Parties of light horse were afterward despatched as far as Londonderry, and some more taken in their own houses, and brought here. They have been examined; some of

them appeared extremely humble and ashamed ; they were led into the mischief by artful men, who have kept themselves out of the way. The greater part were released, and sent home ; but six of the most culpable are in prison here, to be brought before the Superior Court to-morrow. This evening a report is brought in, that a rescue is to be attempted ; and the Chief Justice has issued a warrant for a strong guard at the prison. \* \* \* \* \*

“Monday before sunrise. No disturbance has happened, so I hope the culprits are safe. The whole conduct of this affair on both sides, I trust, will prove beneficial. The riotous spirit has met a severe check, which will give a deep wound to the knavish system ; the hands of lawful government will be strengthened ; it will give a spur to the militia, and each side will now know their own strength and weakness. Our General Sullivan behaved with great prudence, firmness, and despatch ; and success crowned his exertions. General Ceily distinguished himself by rushing sword in hand among the rioters, and pulling them out as a butcher would seize sheep in a flock. Several other continental officers and soldiers did eminent service. The rabble were struck with a panic at the *sight* of the light horse, and the very *name* of artillery. They fled over fences and into the woods, and scattered in all directions.”



## CHAPTER V.

1784—1788.

*The History of New Hampshire. — Letter to Gen. Washington, and Reply. — Invitation from the Church in Federal Street, Boston. — Letter from Proprietors, and Reply. — Anonymous Accusation and Defence. — Installation. — Various Occupations. — Correspondence with Dr. Rush.*

THE next event of importance to be noticed in Mr. Belknap's life, and it is one of the most important, is the publication of the History of New Hampshire. In the preface to the first volume, he gives this account of the causes which led him to engage in the work: "The compiler of this history was early impelled, by his natural curiosity, to inquire into the original settlement, progress, and improvement of the country which gave him birth.

"When he took up his residence in New Hampshire, his inquiries were more particularly directed to that part of it. Having met with some valuable manuscripts which were but little known, he began to extract and methodize the principal things in them; and this employment was (to speak in the style of a celebrated modern author) 'his hobby-horse.'"

The work was commenced during the administration of Governor Wentworth, who was much inter-

ested in its progress, and had the command of books and papers, which he lent to Mr. Belknap, or had transcribed for him. In a letter dated July 6th, 1774, thanking the governor for some papers and books, he says :

“ When I consider the trouble I put your Excellency to, and the expectation you and other gentlemen may probably form from thence, I am ashamed to think that, after all, the mountain may bring forth but a mouse, and that even that will be a long while in coming ; for I find, since my late sickness, that study greatly disagrees with my health.”

And again, in a subsequent letter :

“ I write like one that expected to live to finish what I have begun ; but, alas ! how uncertain is human life ! My health is now in so precarious a situation, that I am advised to abandon study, and betake myself to physic and exercise. What will be the event is known only to Him who superintends the universe ; but, if I should not live to perfect this work, my collections will be left in such a manner as that I trust they will not be lost or scattered ; and they may serve as a help to some other person, better qualified for such an undertaking.”

In his relation of events, he was very desirous to avoid that partial coloring which so often makes a history unfaithful, and took great pains to ascertain the truth for himself, that the work might be original,

and not too dependent on previous publications. To form a correct estimate of the labor of such an undertaking, the condition of the country must be considered ; — without any written history of authority ; the materials to be gathered from manuscripts scattered here and there in the possession of individuals, or from the lips of those who had passed through the scenes and events to be described ; and the troubles of the existing war, which occupied men's minds so entirely, that it was exceedingly difficult to gain attention for any literary object. Notwithstanding these and other difficulties, which made him doubt the possible success of his labors, Mr. Belknap, encouraged by discerning friends, steadily persevered.

The first volume was published in 1784, at Philadelphia, under the superintendence of Ebenezer Hazard, Esq., Postmaster-general, and compiler of the State Papers ; a collection of historical documents, in two large quarto volumes, which he labored with unceasing industry to complete ; contenting himself, like a true patriot, with the humble but arduous task of a compiler, whose work should form a foundation for the future historian of his country. He was the most constant and confidential correspondent of Mr. Belknap, and executed the trust reposed in him with the fidelity of disinterested friendship.

The second and third volumes were published in Boston, in 1791 and 1792.

In the preface to the third volume, the author says :

“ Twenty years have now elapsed, since this work was first undertaken ; during which time it has struggled with many embarrassments, and has more than once been thrown by as impracticable ; but the favorable reception it has met with from the public, and the continual importunity of its friends, have prevailed on me to complete it ; for which purpose no pains have been spared. The receipt on the sale of the volumes *hitherto*, falls short of the actual expense of the impression. How productive it may prove in future, is uncertain. As some encouragement to the work, the Legislature of New Hampshire have granted fifty pounds, which I have received, and for which they again have my thanks.”

From this it appears, that the pecuniary recompense for labor continued at intervals through twenty years, was little or nothing ; but the reputation of the work, founded on its impartiality and accuracy, and the sound and liberal views of the author, has not only been maintained, but increased ; and that writer who is confessedly the most philosophical in his researches into the history and condition of our country, M. de Tocqueville (*Democratie en Amerique*, 1st vol. note F, page 330), thus speaks of it :

“ The History of New Hampshire, by Jeremy Belknap, is a work held in merited estimation. The

author gives extremely precious details concerning the political and religious principles of the Puritans ; on the causes of their emigration and their laws. The reader of Belknap will find more general ideas and more strength of thought, than are to be met with in other American historians, even to the present day."

In the third chapter of the first volume, which is especially commended by De Tocqueville, are the following remarks, concerning the civil and ecclesiastical government of the infant Puritan colony :

"As they were fond of imagining a near resemblance between the circumstances of their settlement in this country and the redemption of Israel from Egypt or Babylon, it is not strange that they should also look upon their 'commonwealth as an institution of God for the preservation of their churches, and the civil rulers as both members and fathers of them.' The famous John Cotton, the first minister in Boston, was the chief promoter of this sentiment. When he arrived, in 1633, he found the people divided in their opinions. Some had been admitted to the privileges of freemen at the first General Court, who were not in communion with the churches : after this, an order was passed, that *none but members of the churches should be admitted freemen* ; whereby all other persons were excluded from every office or privilege, civil or military. This great man by his eloquence confirmed those who had embraced



this opinion, and earnestly pleaded ‘that the government might be conducted as a theocracy, wherein the Lord was judge, lawgiver, and king; that the laws which he gave Israel might be adopted, so far as they were of moral and perpetual equity; that the people might be considered as God’s people, in covenant with him; that none but persons of approved piety and eminent gifts should be chosen rulers; that the ministers should be consulted in all matters of religion; and that the magistrate should have a superintending and coercive power over the churches.’

“At the desire of the court, he compiled a system of laws, founded chiefly on the laws of Moses, which was considered by the legislative body as the general standard; though they never formally adopted it, and, in some instances, varied from it.

“These principles were fundamentally the same with those on which were grounded all the persecutions which they had endured in England, and naturally led to the same extremes of conduct which they had so bitterly complained of in those civil and ecclesiastical rulers, from whose tyranny they had fled into this wilderness. They had already proceeded a step farther than the hierarchy had ever attempted. *No test-law had as yet been made in England*; but they had, at one blow, cut off all but those of their own communion from the privileges of civil offices, however otherwise qualified. They

thought, that, as they had suffered so much in laying the foundation of a new state, which was supposed to be 'a model of the glorious kingdom of Christ on earth,' they had an exclusive right to all the honors and privileges of it; and, having the power in their hands, they effectually established their pretensions, and made all dissenters and disturbers feel the weight of their indignation.

"In consequence of the union thus formed between the church and state, on the plan of the Jewish theocracy, the ministers were called to sit in council, and give their advice in matters of religion and cases of conscience which came before the court; and without them, they never proceeded to any act of an ecclesiastical nature. As none were allowed to vote in the election of rulers but freemen, and freemen must be church members; and as none could be admitted into the church but by the elders who first examined, and then propounded them to the brethren for their vote, the clergy acquired hereby a vast ascendancy over both rulers and people, and had, in effect, the keys of the state as well as the church in their hands. The magistrates, on the other hand, regulated the gathering of churches, interposed in the settlement and dismissal of ministers, arbitrated in ecclesiastical controversies, and controlled synodical assemblies. This coercive power in the magistrate was deemed absolutely necessary, to preserve 'the order of the gospel.'

“The principle on which this power is grounded is expressed in the Cambridge Platform, in terms as soft as possible, and (like divers other articles in that work) is curiously and artfully drawn up, so that there is an appearance of liberty and tenderness, but none in reality. For, although the magistrate was not to restrain any good works, yet *he* was to be the judge of the good or evil of the works to be restrained; and what security could churches have that they should not be restrained in the performance of what they judged to be good works? They might, indeed, think themselves safe, whilst their rulers were so zealous for the purity of the churches of which themselves were members, and whilst their ministers were consulted in all ecclesiastical affairs; but if the civil powers had acted without such consultation, or if the ministers had been induced to yield to the opinion of the magistrates, when contrary to the interest of the churches, what then would have become of religious liberty?”

The first and second volumes contain the history of the state from the discovery of the river Piscataqua to the adoption of the Federal Constitution; and the third consists of a geographical description of New Hampshire, with sketches of its natural history, productions, improvements, and present state of society, laws and government; all demanding different researches and results, many of which were obtained only by sending circular letters to

the clergymen and other principal persons in each town in the state, requesting communications on the various subjects of inquiry.

In a notice of the work by the London Monthly Review for October, 1793, the hope is expressed that a general account of the country may be undertaken; and the opinion is advanced, that in such a work the natural history of the several states would be the most interesting topic, as we are destitute of antiquities, and the histories of the provinces will combine into one general account of the whole. Notwithstanding this opinion of the English Reviewer, the omission of the third volume, in the edition issued by the late Dr. Farmer of Concord, since the expiration of the copyright, has mutilated the work, and done great injustice to the author. The agreeable style in which the descriptions of plants, animals, &c., are given, makes it by no means the least interesting portion of the history; and there are many observations on subjects important to the welfare of the state, which the author, undoubtedly, hoped would have a beneficial effect on its inhabitants.

The volume closes with an address to the people of New Hampshire; and the concluding paragraph gives the author's idea of a happy people. He says:

“Were I to form a picture of happy society, it would be a town consisting of a due mixture of hills, valleys, and streams of water. The land well

fenced and cultivated ; the roads and bridges in good repair ; a decent inn for the refreshment of travellers, and for public entertainments. The inhabitants mostly husbandmen ; their wives and daughters domestic manufacturers ; a suitable proportion of handicraft workmen, and two or three traders ; a physician and lawyer, each of whom should have a farm for his support. A clergyman, of any denomination which should be agreeable to the majority, a man of good understanding, of a candid disposition, and exemplary morals ; not a metaphysical nor a polemical, but a serious and practical, preacher. A schoolmaster, who should understand his business, and teach his pupils to govern themselves. A social library, annually increasing, and under good regulation. A club of sensible men, seeking mutual improvement. A decent musical society. No intriguing politician, horse-jockey, gambler, or sot ; but all such characters treated with contempt. Such a situation may be considered as the most favorable to social happiness, of any which this world can afford."

The following paragraph shows the condition of mineralogy and its kindred sciences at that time, which contrasts strongly with their present and constantly increasing importance, even then foreseen by the writer :

" Mineralogy is a branch of science which is but little cultivated. Men of genius and science have



not leisure to pursue objects from which present advantages cannot be drawn. The disappointments which have attended some expensive attempts, the air of mystery thrown over the subject by ignorant pretenders, and the facility with which every mineral may be imported from abroad, have discouraged inquiries. But, from the specimens which have appeared, there can be no doubt of the existence of mineral and fossil treasures, in the search of which, future generations will find employment."

The first volume of the History was sent to General Washington, in July, 1784, through Mr. Hazard; but, by some delay, did not reach its destination till the following January, when Mr. Hazard says, in one of his letters:

"General Washington has received your History, and sends the enclosed acknowledgment of it, which I am persuaded you will consider as a part of your valuables. The General writes me about it as follows: 'I thank you for your attention in this matter, and pray you to be at the trouble of forwarding the enclosed to that gentleman (Mr. Belknap), *for whose pleasing remembrance of me I feel myself obliged.*' This sentence from General Washington is worth more, and contains more honor, than all the monumental stones erected to the memory of British poets!"

The following letter, to which Mr. Hazard enclosed the reply, was sent with the History:

“ TO GENERAL WASHINGTON :

“ Dover, N. H. July 19th, 1784.

“ GREAT AND GOOD SIR,

“ After the multitude of addresses which have been presented to you in the course and at the conclusion of the late war, it would be needless for an obscure individual to repeat the voice of admiration and gratitude which has resounded from every part of America for the eminent services which you have rendered to this country. It shall be my part, Sir, to ask your acceptance of the first volume of a work, in which you will see the early struggles and sufferings of one of those states which now claim the honor of being defended by your sword. Though in the late arduous contest it has not been so much exposed as in former wars, yet, having long been a nursery of stern heroism, it has bred an hardy race of men, whose merits as soldiers are well known to their beloved general, and who will always glory in having assisted to plant the laurel which adorns his brow.

“ I am, Sir, with a degree of respect approaching to veneration,

“ Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

“ J. B.”

“ Mount Vernon, 5th January, 1785.

“ REV. SIR,

“ A few days ago, under cover from Mr. Hazard, of Philadelphia, I was honored with your

favor of the 19th of July, and the first volume of your History of New Hampshire.

“For both, I pray you to accept my thanks; but my acknowledgments are more particularly due for your favorable expression, in the former, of my past endeavors to support the cause of liberty.

“The proof you have given of your approbation of this is interesting: I receive it with gratitude, and am, with great respect,

“Reverend Sir,

“Your most obedient, humble servant,

“GEO. WASHINGTON.

“THE REV. MR. BELKNAP.”

The church in Long Lane, now Federal Street, Boston, was originally Presbyterian, but had lately relinquished this form of government, and adopted the Congregational order. The founder of the society, Rev. John Moorhead, came over from Ireland with the first members, who were mostly farmers, in the year 1727, to escape the enormous rent required of them for their lands. They erected a building at the corner of Berry Street and Long Lane, in 1729. It was a low wooden building of one story; and, when the church was rebuilt, the original house was moved to Cow Lane, now High Street, and used as a bakehouse by a man named Kettle.

The society increased, and the pastor was much beloved ; he died December 3d, 1774, in the seventieth year of his age. The history of the church from this period to the settlement of Rev. Robert Annan, remains in obscurity : this took place in 1783, and in 1785 he was dismissed by the presbytery at his own request.

The invitation to Mr. Belknap was resolved upon at a meeting of the proprietors, and others of the church, January 28th, 1787, and is as follows :

“ Boston, January 30th, 1787.

“ REV. SIR,

“ Our manifest wants have long pointed out to us the necessity we are in of a gospel minister. The character we have had of you, and our own good opinion of your talents and ability, have induced us to come to a serious resolution of calling and inviting you to become our pastor, which we now do in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the great Head of his church, and on the behalf of our society.

“ We promise to love and obey you in the Lord, and assure you, that you shall be as honestly welcome to us in all well-timed admonitions, as in your administrations of comfort and consolation to our distresses.

“ Suffer us, we pray you, to subjoin the obligations which we have laid ourselves under, for your

comfortable support, so long as the Lord shall be pleased to continue you to be our minister.

“ We are, Sir, with love and esteem, your most obedient and humble servants,

“ SIMON ELLIOT,	} <i>Proprietors’ Committee.”</i>
ROB. MCNEILL,	
ROBERT WIER,	
JNO. BOIES,	
MOSES BLACK,	
ARCHIBALD MCNEIL,	
THOMAS LAMB,	

The obligations were, “ to pay him for his support, from the time he commenced his charge, the sum of two pounds eight shillings lawful money per week, or quarterly if he chooses it, during the whole time of his ministry among us ; and in case our society shall increase, and the pews be all occupied, the salary shall then be increased to a comfortable support.”

This invitation was sent to Mr. Belknap on the 2d of February, and his reply is dated,

“ Boston, Feb. 7th, 1787.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ Be pleased to communicate to the church and congregation whom you represent, my acceptance of the invitation which they have given me, to take the pastoral care of them according to the Word of God.



“The unanimity which you have discovered in this transaction, and the affectionate manner in which you have communicated your request, indicate such a spirit of love and fidelity, as gives me the surest pledge of peace and usefulness among you.

“Fully convinced of the truth and importance of the Christian religion, and desirous to preach to others that Gospel by which I hope to be saved myself, I ask your prayers for me, and shall always depend on your hearty coöperation with me, in my endeavors to promote the cause of truth and righteousness, and the welfare of the society.

“From the character which you bear among your neighbors, as well as your own expressed in your votes, I have full reliance on your sincere intentions to afford me that comfortable support which will keep my mind free from embarrassment with regard to externals, and enable me to pursue my studies, and attend to the several parts of my ministerial work, with ease and cheerfulness.

“That the blessing of God may be on you and your families, that additions may be made to your number of such as shall be saved, and that you may be my joy and crown in the day of the Lord, is the sincere prayer of,

“Your affectionate friend and servant  
in the gospel,

“JEREMY BELKNAP.

“To the Committee of the Congregational Society

in Long Lane, to be communicated to the said Society."

The installation took place on the fourth of April. The writer of a sketch of Mr. Belknap's life and character makes the following remark on this event :

"Nothing could have been more agreeable to the ministers and people of other churches, and to all who regarded the interests of the University of Cambridge, with which he became officially connected ; being fully confident that he would be a great instrument in promoting the cause of religion and learning."

Between the time when Mr. Belknap accepted the call, and the day appointed for his installation, some person who was apparently annoyed by the change in the church government, and by the liberal views of the chosen pastor, tried to persuade the brethren of the church, that he was a Universalist and a follower of Murray ; and to this end, an anonymous letter was written to one of the deacons, an account of which, and the proceedings thereupon, Mr. Belknap has left recorded in the following words :

"March 16th, 1787. — An anonymous letter to Deacon Wright, intimating that their pastor elect is a Universalist, wondering that they should choose such a man as much as if Murray himself were

chosen ; asking, ‘ Is there not a man of discernment among you ? ’—advising them to put these questions to me :

“ Whether I believe that any of the human race will be miserable in a future state ? Whether I believe that the punishment of the wicked will be of equal duration with the happiness of the righteous, and both with the existence of God ? Whether I believe that all children are born into the family of Christ ? and concluding thus : ‘ If he answers these questions according to the Calvinistic scheme, he has lately altered his sentiments.’

“ Signed,

“ MOORHEAD’S GHOST.

“ Directed to the *once* Presbyterian Society in Boston.

“ This letter was shown me in the afternoon. In the evening, the committee were to meet in order to regulate the intended instalment. I was invited, and met with them, and took the opportunity to tell them that such a letter had been received.

“ Who the writer is, and what his design, we can but conjecture, and that must be left to future inquiries ; but, as to the matters objected, it is proper I should give you satisfaction. I am not fond of controversy, and always endeavored to avoid it ; but, when any proper occasion calls for a declaration of my sentiments, will freely do it.

“My practice has always been to study the scriptures, in order to find out truth and duty. What there appears sufficient evidence for, I admit as truth : where the evidence is not sufficient to induce belief, I allow myself to doubt. This every man has a right to do.

“As to the controversy about Murray, I never conversed with him but once : what he said was new and strange. On examining my Bible, I saw no reason to admit it, and therefore passed it by.

“Some years ago, Murray came into my parish. Some people wished to hear him, and asked me for the liberty of the pulpit. I said it was mine when I wanted it, and theirs when they pleased to use it. They got him to preach. I did not attend ; but, understanding that he had been on the parable of the tares and wheat, I took the liberty, which I thought it was my duty, to preach the next Sabbath against what I deemed the errors adopted by his followers. (Here I read the sermon.) These were then my sentiments, and they are the same now. I never had a doubt, that faith, repentance, and holiness, or a change from a state of sin to newness of life, is necessary to prepare us for heaven.

“When the Chauncy controversy came abroad, which engaged every body’s attention more or less, it was natural for me to incline to one side or the other. I was inclined to call in question the immortality of the wicked in a state of future punish-

ment, though I had no doubt of the certainty of the punishment. There are difficulties attending the subject on every side in which it can be viewed ; and after much thought upon the matter, I am inclined to this opinion, that the revelation which God has given us in the Scriptures is intended to regulate our present conduct in this world, and to give us to understand what will be the consequences, in the future state, of our good and bad behavior here.

“I believe the resurrection of the just and the unjust ; that the life which the just shall receive from Christ, at their resurrection, will be immortal ; and that they shall never die any more ; but doubt whether it can be proved from the Scriptures, that the life which the wicked shall receive at their resurrection is immortal — if it can, it will follow, that their misery will never end ; but am rather inclined to think, that the life which they will then receive will be a *mortal life*, that they will be subject to a series of misery and torment, which will terminate in a *second death*. Whether this second death is an utter extinction of being, or whether they will be delivered from it by another resurrection, are points which I cannot determine, nor do I think the Scriptures afford us full satisfaction on these subjects ; so that I expect no full solution in this world, and am fully contented with believing that the surest way for us is to believe in Christ, to fear God, and work righteousness, in obedience to the Gospel, and thus



secure our own happiness, without prying too curiously into the secret and future designs of God. The apostles themselves declared, '*We know but in part, and we prophesy but in part.*' If the chosen and inspired ambassadors of Jesus Christ were imperfect in their knowledge, how can we expect perfection in this life ?

"If, upon this declaration of my mind, you see fit to recommend to the society to recall the invitation they have given me to settle with you, I am content.

"The committee did not think the matters in question were so essential as to suspend their proceedings. Some of them said they differed from me in their apprehension of these points ; but as we agreed in the main truths of Christianity, faith, repentance, and holiness, and salvation through Jesus Christ, there was no need of further debate ; and then proceeded to make preparation for my instalment.

"The names of the committee were Robert Wier, William Mackay, Simon Elliot, Francis Wright, Moses Black."

The Boston clergymen at that time, with few exceptions, were obliged, by the inadequacy of their salaries, to resort to other means of support for their families ; and, for this object, Mr. Belknap received at his house a few young men to instruct in higher

branches than were taught in the public schools. One or two of them, whose parents resided at a distance, lived in his family; but generally they were day scholars. He was a constant contributor to the *Columbian Magazine*; the publication of the first volume of his *History* had been rather a loss to him than a gain, in a pecuniary point of view; the country was so impoverished, that, as one of his friends said, most people loved money much better than books; many subscribers did not fulfil their agreements; some of the shopkeepers where the books were deposited for sale, failed; and a needy clergyman, to whom he had entrusted some, wrote him as follows:

“I have sold your books, and got the money; but I can't spare it!” So that the satisfaction of having advanced the cause of literature and the history of his country was the most solid one for all his labor.

Notwithstanding these and other difficulties, Mr. Belknap's position, as a Boston clergyman, was much more advantageous for himself and the community, than it could have been, had he remained in Dover. There he was without literary associates or advantages, and always felt himself to be in a remote corner of the world, which obliged him to leave to others in more central situations the execution of plans for the public benefit, in which he took the greatest interest. Boston was then, as it is now,

highly favored in literary advantages. Here he was surrounded by congenial spirits, and found ample room for the exercise of his active mind and benevolent heart, in the promotion and encouragement of the numerous and growing schemes for the welfare and improvement of his native place.

The town was just recovering from the disastrous effects of the Revolutionary war, and, with the energy of newly restored freedom and the revival of commercial enterprise, was laying the foundation of its present prosperity; but the ill consequences of the past disturbances were not wanting. Public morality was impaired; infidelity, with the evils of which it is the source, was widely extended; principles were unsettled; the cause of education languished; and the churches not only felt the influence of all these adverse circumstances, but were disturbed by controversies more peculiarly their own. The difficulties of a minister's position, and the discouragements and trials he was called to encounter, are fairly set forth in Mr. Belknap's sermon before the Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers in 1796.

Beside the occupations mentioned above, he was one of the Overseers of Harvard College, and one of the Library committee, a member of the Humane Society, one of the committee for visiting the public schools, and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; he had been for some years

an honorary member of the Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. He not only nominally belonged to all these associations, but actually labored to advance their objects heartily and with steady and persevering efforts.

The superintendence of the public schools was no slight part of a minister's occupation. The selection of books, the arrangement and supervision of studies, and the periodical examinations, were principally committed to the clergy. The education of the young was a favorite object with Mr. Belknap, as he duly estimated its great importance to the welfare of the state; and evidences are yet remaining, among his papers, of the zeal with which he performed these duties. He took much pains to procure the publication of suitable books for the young; and his services in their cause are honorably mentioned in the various notices of his character at the time of his decease, and remembered by some now living, who, as children, were won by the kindness and attraction of his manner, and who speak of him with a warmth of feeling which nothing but a conviction of his sympathy and love for them could have preserved through the trials and changes of so many intervening years.

As an overseer of the college, he had duties to perform which were indefinitely extended by his filial love for it, and his pride in its advancement. It is only of late years that the relations of the

overseers to the college have been almost entirely nominal. When the Board was composed of the Congregational clergy of the six towns nearest to Cambridge, a continual oversight was exercised by its members. A close relation was maintained between its head, its officers and the clergy; and the advice of the latter was constantly sought, not only in emergencies, but in the regulation of its ordinary affairs. That Mr. Belknap lent them gladly all the aid in his power is evident from the frequency of his attendance in the various committees, and from the careful consideration he gave to various plans for the improvement of the college.

Mr. Belknap's historical pursuits required an extensive correspondence; and his desire of doing good to his fellow-men induced him to coöperate eagerly with the benevolent and philanthropic, in their endeavors to lessen the burden of existing evils, or to improve the condition of social institutions. The following letter from Dr. Rush of Philadelphia, a zealous philanthropist, and Mr. Belknap's reply, show the efforts that were then making in the cause of Temperance, and the opinions of the writers on several other important subjects:

"Philadelphia, July 13th, 1789.

"DEAR SIR,

"Mr. Hall, the printer, has neglected hitherto to republish the essay upon spirits, probably



from an opinion that it was less necessary than formerly. Much less rum will be used this year than last, in this and the adjoining states of New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. From the influence of the Quakers and Methodists in checking this evil, I am disposed to believe that the business must be effected, finally, by religion alone. Human reason has been employed in vain ; and the conduct of New England in Congress has furnished us with a melancholy proof, that we have nothing to hope from the influence of *law*, in making men wise and sober.

“ Let these considerations lead us to address the heads and governing bodies of all the churches in America, upon the subject. I have borne testimony (by particular desire), at a Methodist conference, against the use of ardent spirits, and, I hope, with effect. I have likewise written to the Roman Catholic Bishop, Dr. Carroll, in Maryland, to set an association on foot against them in his society. I have repeatedly insisted upon a testimony being published against them by the Presbyterian Synod of this city, and have suggested to our good Bishop, Dr. White, the necessity of the episcopal church not standing neuter in this interesting business. Go thou, my friend, and in your circle of influence or acquaintance ‘do likewise.’

“ You will find an essay upon the inutility of the Latin and Greek languages, in the last number of the Museum, which has been ascribed to me. I wish

it could be republished in Boston. It has some able advocates in this city, particularly Dr. Franklin, Mr. Clymer, and Mr. Coxe. \* \* \* \* \*

“ I am now preparing an address, to be delivered before the visitors of the Young Ladies’ Academy, in this city, at the next quarterly examination, ‘upon the necessity and advantages of teaching children to read by means of the Bible.’ I consider this as a matter of more importance in the world, than keeping up a regular gospel ministry ; and yet, strange to tell ! there are religious men, and even ministers of the gospel, who disapprove of it. The great enemy of the salvation of man, in my opinion, never invented a more effectual means of extirpating Christianity from the world, than by persuading mankind that it was improper to read the Bible at schools.

“ The more I attend to the methods in which education is conducted in our country, the more I am disposed to suspect that our schools and colleges do more harm than good, to the interests of humanity, virtue, and religion. What are Latin and Greek, and mathematics and philosophy, if they do not lead us nearer to the Parent of the universe, and the Source and Centre of all perfection and happiness ?

“ From, Dear Sir,

“ Yours, sincerely,

“ BENJN. RUSH.”

## MR. BELKNAP'S REPLY.

"Boston, July 29th, 1789.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"The originality and independence of sentiment in your letters and other writings render them exceedingly grateful to me, although I am obliged sometimes to withhold my assent to what you deliver; but when your thoughts coincide with my own, there is generated a double satisfaction. On the several subjects touched upon in your last, of the 13th inst., I could write a pamphlet, if it were necessary; they having been frequently the theme of my contemplation.

"With respect to spirituous liquors, I believe some good has been done; but much more remains to be done. The distilleries here are so ready a source of gain, that till the *auri sacra fames* shall cease to be a ruling passion, I fear there will be no end put to them: however, we do what we can by way of precept and example, and we do not intend to be discouraged. The demand from abroad, I am told, increases, particularly from the north of Europe; and while the stills are kept going, there will be a large home consumption. In an excursion of about eighty miles into the country, a few weeks since, I met many loads of pot and pearl ashes coming down; and, on my return, the teams which I met were loaded with dry fish, hogsheads of salt, and

barrels of *rum*. The thirst for spirits in the back country is so ardent, that in the fall and winter they will sell their wheat for this sort of pay, and then, in the spring and summer following, go forty or fifty miles after bread.

“What you say on the use of the Bible in schools agrees perfectly well with my own idea, and, ‘strange to tell,’ I have been obliged to controvert this point with men who, in other respects, are laudably zealous and exemplary in the cause of religion and virtue.

“But, my dear doctor, why banish Latin and Greek? Was not the New Testament written in Greek? and may not the Greek and Latin Testaments, and the *Selectæ e Veteri*, &c., lately reprinted in Philadelphia, and used in the schools there, have as happy an effect in impressing the minds of youth with religious sentiments, as the English Bible? I have not seen what you refer to in the Museum. The names which you have cited as ‘able advocates’ for the disuse of Latin and Greek, are truly respectable; I could also cite some very ‘able advocates’ for the disuse of the Bible in schools: but both are cases which require to be decided by their own merits, and not by the respectability of advocates; though that may induce a more critical examination of the merits, since it must be presumed that such gentlemen would not patronize an opinion of so much consequence, without very

good reasons. I can conceive, and am by my own experience and observation persuaded, that, by a judicious attention to students while they are learning the Biblical Greek and Latin, there may arise such a variety of questions and observations, as may not only make the study entertaining but instructive ; and that they may by gentle degrees be led into an acquaintance with, and veneration for, the character and work of our blessed Saviour, at the same time that they are reciting the language in which his evangelists and apostles wrote, or into which their works have been translated.

“ That schools and colleges may be better conducted than at present, I am fully persuaded. It is, however, difficult, and in some cases impracticable, to alter old foundations ; but were I to be consulted in the establishment of a new college, I should utterly discard the residing of the students in barracks, their eating in common, and the establishment of academical discipline separate from municipal law. I would have students reside in sober, decent families, and be under the same government with their fellow-citizens. At stated hours they should resort to the public rooms, to perform their exercises ; and they should receive the honors of the university when they are qualified. Are not your universities upon some such plan ? Ours partakes too much of the nature of a monastic institution, and, like an antique building, needs many subsidiary props and



additional repairs. However, there are great advantages to be reaped by an education in it, provided the students give their minds to their business; and without that, no means will be effectual. There is a special injunction laid on the professors to take frequent occasion to introduce reflections on the being, perfections, and providence of the Creator; and I believe this injunction is strictly attended to, as well by the professor of natural philosophy as by those of anatomy and botany: and these occasions perpetually occur, for —

‘There’s not a plant or flower that grows,  
But makes his glories known;  
While clouds arise and tempests blow  
By order from his throne.’

“The main business of all philosophical researches is to fix our attention to the great ‘Cause uncaused;’ and the deeper we penetrate the arcana of nature, the more reason do we find for wonder, love, and praise.”

At the Commencement of Harvard College this year, 1787, John Quincy Adams was graduated. Mr. Belknap requested, for the press, a copy of the oration delivered by him on that occasion. The young gentleman expressed himself highly honored by the request, but wished that his piece might ap-

pear in company with the poem of his friend, Mr. Harris, and also that his name should not be affixed to it.

Mr. Harris positively refused a copy of his verses, and Mr. Belknap wrote again to Mr. Adams on the subject, as follows :

" Boston, August 3d, 1787.

" DEAR SIR,

" I have perused your oration with a repetition of the pleasure which I enjoyed in hearing it, and am much obliged to you for putting it into my hands. But you have at the same time laid me under an embarrassment from which I wish to be relieved. \* \* \* \* \*

" Nothing is more amiable in a young gentleman of acknowledged genius, than *modesty* ; but is it not an attribute of that wisdom which adorns modesty, that it is ' easy to be entreated ' ?

" Why, then, should the refusal of Mr. H. influence Mr. A. ? Can your modesty suffer by yielding to a proper solicitation ? \* \* \* \* \*

" And why should the name be suppressed ? — a name which calls up every grateful and affectionate feeling in the breasts of Americans ? Without the name, your Alma Mater will be deprived of half the honor which she deserves ; but, if that be added, the friends of liberty and virtue will have the farther satisfaction to see the features of the parent in the

son ; and, may I not add, your country will have a pledge of a succession of abilities in the same family, still to aid her cause and espouse her interest.

“ I hope that further consideration will induce you to take off the embargo you have laid on my wishes, and beg you would, as soon as possible, let me again hear from you.”

Mr. Adams finally left the matter entirely to the discretion of Mr. Belknap, who sent the Oration to Philadelphia, for publication in the *Columbian Magazine*. It appeared in the number for September, 1787 ; and the author's name was given. The subsequent history of Mr. Adams makes it interesting to see Mr. Belknap's early appreciation of the character of a man who has devoted his life to the service of his country, and has enjoyed the highest honors and offices in her power to bestow.

## CHAPTER VI.

1788—1792.

*Exertions to abolish the Slave Trade. — Three Bills of Sale, and Certificates of Manumission. — Letter of Cato Baker. — Anecdote. — Correspondence with Moses Brown. — Correspondence with David Howell. — Adoption of Federal Constitution. — Visit of Washington to Boston. — Death of Mr. Belknap's son Samuel. — Sermon at the Installation of Dr. Morse. — Extracts from Letters of John Adams. — Degree of D.D. conferred on Mr. Belknap. — Increase of Federal Street Society. — Century Discourse.*

IN the month of February, 1788, three negroes were decoyed on board a vessel in Boston harbor, and taken to the Danish island of St. Bartholomew, where they were offered for sale. This infamous transaction excited great indignation in the community; and Mr. Belknap consulted some of his friends as to the practicability of improving this feeling, to effect the abolition of slavery in the state. His brother-in-law, Mr. Samuel Eliot, agreed with him that the time was most opportune, but said the difficulty in such cases was, who should step forward,—and recommended him to suggest to the Association

of ministers, at their next meeting, a petition to the General Court, whose session was then about to commence ; if he failed to gain the coöperation of the ministers, to apply to the Humane Society, and at all events to have a petition drafted.

This advice Mr. Belknap complied with : he drew up a petition, which his friends pronounced "incapable of amendment," gained the support of the association, and of a large number of citizens beside. The blacks also presented a petition, written by Prince Hall, one of their number ; and there was one from the Quakers, presented at a former session, lying on the table. The effect of this movement, so judiciously timed, was the passage of an Act, March 26th, 1788, "to prevent the Slave Trade, and for granting relief to the families of such unhappy persons as may be kidnapped or decoyed away from this commonwealth."

Mr. Belknap had long been a friend to the freedom of the blacks. He had published essays in their favor ; and, during the revolutionary war, several of them deposited with him the bill of sale, and certificate of manumission which they had gained by three years' service in the army.

Three of these still remain among his papers, and they are given here as specimens. They were enclosed in sealed envelopes, marked as belonging to the person named within.



"Newport, Dec. 6th, 1773.

"I do hereby acknowledge to have received of Mr. Otis Baker, of Dover, in New Hampshire, one thousand four hundred pounds, old tenor, in full for a negro boy named Cato, whom I have this day sold to him ; which negro lad to him the said Otis Baker, and his assigns for ever, I hereby promise to defend against the lawful claims of all persons whatsoever. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand,

"HENRY WARD."

"Dover, June 4th, 1777.

"This may certify all persons, that I, Otis Baker, do hereby give to the within-named Cato his freedom, and discharge him from my service and the service of my heirs for ever.

"OTIS BAKER.

"*Witness*, JEREMY BELKNAP."

"Know all men by these presents, that I, George Waldron, of Portsmouth, in the province of New Hampshire, yeoman, for and in consideration of six hundred pounds, old tenor, bills of public credit to me in hand paid by Dudley Watson, of Dover, in said province, gentleman ; the receipt of which to full contents and satisfaction, I hereby acknowledge ; have bargained and sold, and herewith deliver unto the said Dudley Watson, one negro servant boy, about eight years of age, a slave born in Portsmouth

aforesaid, to serve him the said Dudley, his executors, administrators, and assigns, as a slave for and during the life of the said boy named Glouster. To have and to hold the said negro boy named Glouster to him the said Dudley Watson, his executors, administrators, and assigns, as a slave for and during the life of the negro boy; and I, the said George Waldron, by these presents, for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators, do covenant, grant, and engage unto and with the said Dudley Watson, his executors, administrators, and assigns, that I am the true and lawful owner of the said negro boy, and will warrant the right and possession of the said negro, against the lawful claims of all persons whatsoever. — Witness my hand and seal, the 26th day of July, 1758.

“GEO. WALDRON.

“*Witness present,*

THOS. W. WALDRON,

NATHL. MUCHAMORE.

“Dover, June 4th, 1777.

“This may certify all persons, that I, Thomas Watson, as administrator to the estate of my father, Dudley Watson, deceased, do hereby give the within-named Glouster his freedom, and discharge him from the service of the heirs of said estate for ever.

“THOMAS WATSON.

“*Witness,* JEREMY BELKNAP.”

"Dover, July ye 19th, 1756.

"Received from Mr. James Chesley, six hundred pounds old tenor, in full for one negro man-servant, named Corradan, aged about sixteen years; which said negro I have sold to the said Chesley, the day and year above written. — Witness my hand,

"WILLIAM SHACKFORD.

"*Witness*, JOS. HANSON,  
EPHM. HANSON."

"Dover, April 13th, 1778.

"Received of the within-named Corydon the sum of seventy-five pounds lawful money, for which he is hereby discharged from the service of the heirs of the within-named James Chesley, and is now free.

"OTIS BAKER, one of the Administrators,  
her

"LYDIA + CHESLEY, Administratrix."  
mark.

The certificates of manumission are all in the handwriting of Mr. Belknap.

Cato Baker, the first of the above-named negroes, had received some education, enough to enable him to write letters during his term of service in the army. One of these, addressed to Mr. Belknap, is quite a curiosity in orthography and expression, and gives an interesting glance at the condition of the corps to which he belonged.

"Danbury September 26th 1778.

"Mr. Jaramiah Balknap j have met with this appettunity Rite to you and your famalay wall as thos few lin have left me. Sir j am wall in good health and j thank God for it of his good will he hath been my Gard in all those Beatle j have bein in and j had the small pox in Vally forg last march 24d but now j am of Good health but now at this present time j have no money at this present times but j shall Draw som son and j will send it to you but j have Dron som mooney and j let it Go to Ltunant Chas and to on anotheir for it is hard tim with ous in this prasent for Cloathing and for otheir thing me Drow one pound of beef and one pound of bread and one jiel of Rum Every otheir Day but our duty is not so hard as it was but we fair hard in Clothing for we are fost to pay for our Clothin. Whitch Doth mak me think it hard for bein that j Los all my Clothing now j am fost to pay for all.

"CATO BACAKER.

To

MR. JEREMIAH BALKNAP

att

Dover in

Newhamshire."

The following anecdote connected with this subject, it is believed, has never been made public. In 1790, a census was ordered by the General Govern-

ment then newly established, and the Marshal of the Massachusetts district had the care of making the survey. When he inquired for *slaves*, most people answered none, — if any one said that he had one, the marshal would ask him whether he meant to be singular, and would tell him that no other person had given in any. The answer then was, “If none are given in, I will not be singular ;” and thus the list was completed without any number in the column for slaves.

Some of this improvident race had sagacity enough to refuse the offer of freedom, and remained under the master they had served in their youth, that he might provide for and protect their old age.

After the publication of the first volume of his History, in which are mentioned the early prohibition of slavery by the first settlers, and the subsequent inconsistency of keeping slaves and at the same time struggling for our own liberty, Mr. Belknap received the following letter :

“Providence, 28th 1st Mo., 1786.

“RESPECTED FRIEND,

“From observing in thy History of New Hampshire, an account of a negro’s being ordered back from New England to Africa, that was unjustly brought from thence, and thy remarks thereon, I conceive thou art a friend to the liberty of that op-



pressed people, and of course opposed to that iniquitous trade to Africa for slaves, which remains to be carried on in several of the United States, to the dishonor of the whole, and the Christian name in that heathenish country, where the name of Christian, from the abusive treatment of those people by such as possess it, is abhorred. I have therefore enclosed thee three pamphlets on that subject, which perhaps may not all of them have reached thee, for thy inspection and disposal where they may be useful. I should rejoice thou hadst as a historian to record, to the honor of any of the states, prohibitory laws against the slave-trade to any part of the world. Though a stranger, professing myself a friend to liberty and mankind, however differing in sentiments as to non-essentials, I have taken this liberty, and conclude thy friend,

“MOSES BROWN.”

The following is an imperfect copy of the reply to this letter :

“To Mr. Moses Brown, of Providence.

“Dover, July 15th, 1786.

“WORTHY SIR,

“Your very obliging favor of the 28th 1st M<sup>o</sup> came to my hands yesterday, and I am particularly grateful to you for the pamphlets inclosed. The subject of them has long lain with weight upon

my mind ; and what I have said in my History which you so kindly notice, is but a small specimen of what I have thought and written on the subject. It is a pleasing circumstance to me, that so many able pens are employed, and so many pertinent and weighty arguments are used, and that the press so frequently teems with productions, on the subject of the African slavery. ‘The words of the wise are as goads ;’ and Heaven grant that these goads may wound and torment the consciences of all the abettors of slavery, till they find it hard to ‘kick against the pricks’ !

“Great changes in the principles and habits of mankind must, in the nature of things, be brought about slowly ; but *nil desperandum* ! Truth is great, and will prevail ; and all lovers of truth, liberty, and religion, must unite their endeavors, and persevere in them, until their voice shall be heard. I wish your society in England may petition and remonstrate *annually* to the parliament, until they obtain their desire. Who knows but in time there may be such a man as Joseph of Germany on the throne of Britain ; or such a man as Montesquieu may be at the head of her councils ? Blessed be the name of Anthony Benezet, for what he has written and done toward abolishing the trade in ‘slaves and souls of men ;’ and let the highest praises be given to the memory of the late Dr. Fothergill, for that noble projection of sending missionaries into Africa, to

persuade the negro princes to employ their people in cultivating the sugar cane in their country, and instruct them in the work, instead of selling them to foreigners for this purpose. Can you tell me, my dear sir, whether this proposal is likely to be executed?

“I wish with you that it may be in the power of future historians to record laws made in all these states for the abolishing of slavery. But *quid leges sine moribus vanæ proficiunt?* I wish the time may come when the owner and master of every vessel employed in this sanguinary trade shall be considered as a felon; as guilty of a cruel, unprovoked, offensive war against the innocent, and punished as a murderer, whom vengeance suffereth not to live. But until this desirable change can be effected, I would recommend one method as a means of gradually extirpating the evil, and that is, making it a part of education to instil into the minds of children the principles of universal liberty, and an abhorrence of slavery. If the Lacedemonians taught their children to abhor drunkenness by showing them a drunken man, may we not hope that, by representing to our children the horrors of predatory quarrels in Africa, the loathsome, dismal condition of a ship loaded with sick, dying, or discontented and mutinying slaves, and the rigors of a West India plantation, we may be able to excite in their minds such an abhorrence of this diabolical traffic as

may accompany every stage of their improvement, and every sphere in which they may act in future life? And who knows what beneficial consequences may result from it? It should be a frequent subject of discourse in families, a theme of declamation in schools and seminaries; and it is no matter how numerous are the publications from the press on this subject.

“I wish you, and all the friends of peace and liberty, the most happy success; and if you can point out to me any method wherein I can assist in promoting the desirable object of our mutual wishes, I shall be glad to receive your communications and commands.”

Mr. Belknap was elected a member of the society for abolishing the slave-trade in Rhode Island; and in 1790 he received a letter from the president of the society, expressing a desire that a similar association should be formed in Boston, and that Congress should be petitioned on the subject. His reply shows a discernment and discretion which are very important in the treatment of this delicate question:

“Boston, June 14th, 1790.

“SIR,

“Sometime ago I received a letter from you, expressing a desire that an association might be formed in this place, for the abolition of slavery, and to petition Congress for that purpose.

“ Having taken time to think and make inquiry on the matter, I am of opinion that such an association is entirely needless here, as we have no slavery to abolish ; all persons who can claim the privilege of being descendants of Adam being declared free by our constitution ; and I sincerely wish, that the multitudes of blacks among us might enjoy the same blessings which other people enjoy, as the fruit of their liberty ; but, alas ! many of them are in a far worse condition than when they were slaves, being incapable of providing for themselves the means of subsistence.

“ As to the proposed application to Congress, if any such be made, it can be considered only in the light of an admonition to them to do the duty which they are bound to do by the constitution. I very much doubt the prudence or propriety of such an application from any body of men whatever, unless it should appear that Congress are negligent of their duty. Should I live to see that day, I hope I shall not be wanting in any endeavors which may be in my power to coöperate with my fellow-citizens, in advising or remonstrating, as there may be occasion.

“ I am sorry that I am obliged to differ in opinion from you, and the society in whose name you write. I beg you to accept what I write with candor, and I am, sir, your very humble servant,

“ JEREMY BELKNAP.

“ DAVID HOWELL, Esq.”



The Federal Constitution was adopted by Massachusetts in 1788, and Mr. Belknap attended the debates of the convention, and kept minutes of the proceedings; but they are already matter of history. The inauguration of Washington, as President of the Federal Union, took place April 30th, 1789; and in October he visited Boston, and was received with great rejoicings. Mr. Belknap's interview with him is thus noted down in his almanac:

“27th. General Washington having appointed this day for the clergy of this town to wait upon him, we went at ten o'clock to his lodgings, and paid him our respects.

“When I was introduced to General Washington, he said to me,

“‘I am indebted to you, sir, for the History of New Hampshire, and it gave me great pleasure.’”

This is the only instance that appears of his recording the approbation of others, and it shows how highly he valued these few and simple words of courtesy from the Father of his country.

In the spring of this year, Mr. Belknap's second son, Samuel, died, an account of which was written at the time by the bereaved parent, as follows:

“March 28th. This evening, at half after nine o'clock, my dear son Samuel died, aged 17 years and three months. He had a long and painful illness, which he bore with the most exemplary pa-

tience ; and the nearer he approached towards his end, the more did his patience shine. He had strong exercises of mind some weeks before his death, and obtained a comfortable hope in the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, and gave us very good satisfaction respecting his repentance and faith in Christ for salvation. His senses held till a few minutes before he expired. I asked him whether he could commit himself into the hands of Christ ; he answered with a strong and lively voice, ‘ *Yes.*’ I asked him if he had a good hope of the mercy of God in Christ ; he answered, ‘ *Yes.*’ I then prayed with him ; this was about half an hour before he died. Blessed be God for the consolation we have in his death ! He was a faithful, useful, diligent, and affectionate child.”

On the 30th of April, 1789, Mr. Belknap preached the sermon at the installation of Rev. Jedediah Morse, in Charlestown, from this text—1st Peter, v. 3: “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.” This discourse he sent to the Vice-President, John Adams, who, in a letter thanking him for the attention, makes the following observations :

“The more the subject is considered, the sooner all men will be convinced, that human passions are all insatiable ; that, instead of being extinguished, moderated, or contented, they always strengthen by indulgence and gratification ; and therefore, that

the only security against them is in checks, whether in civil or ecclesiastical societies.

“ This is no more true with regard to the love of power, than it is with regard to the love of riches, of fame, of honor, or of pleasure. While we see and acknowledge it to be the constitution of our nature ; the quality to which we owe our activity and industry, our virtues and our happiness ; we ought, instead of quarrelling with it, to be only on our guard against its tendency to abuse to vice and misery when uncontrolled.

“ I thank you, sir, for giving me this opportunity of assuring you that I am, with great esteem,

“ Your most obedient servant,

“ JOHN ADAMS.

“ THE REV. MR. BELKNAP.”

An extract from another letter of the Vice-President is subjoined, for the sake of the anecdote concerning Franklin, which it contains.

“ After the loss of Canada, the vast addition to the naval power and commercial advantages of England alarmed the French very much, and there is no doubt that the thought of assisting the British Colonies to throw off the yoke occurred to them ; as the loss of America, now rankling in the hearts and tingling in the veins of the English nation, is every day suggesting to them the project of assist-

ing the Spaniards of South America to separate from Spain.

“Monsieur Le Roy, a French academician, who had been acquainted with Dr. Franklin in England, upon introducing him at Paris to some members of the Academy of Sciences, said :

“*‘Voilà Monsieur Frankland, qui est de ce pays là en Amerique, qui nous débarrassera un jour de ces Anglais.’*

“This, Le Roy told me in presence of Dr. Franklin, who said he remembered it very well. This sentiment, I doubt not, had its influence in procuring Franklin to be elected a member of that academy. But it was a vague though general presentiment, and no explicit advances were ever made to him, or any one else, by the French court, till 1775.”

At the Commencement in 1792, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon Mr. Belknap, by Harvard University. This honor he would have modestly declined, and was about to write a letter to the corporation of the College for that purpose, but was prevented by his friend, Dr. Clarke, who entreated him not to affront his Alma Mater by refusing the honor she offered for his acceptance.

The Society in Federal Street were very much attached to their pastor, and additions to their number enabled them to increase his salary to a comfortable support, so that he was no longer obliged to receive scholars ; and his life, after his removal to

Boston, was in every respect more free from harassing care and anxiety than it had been for many years.

On the 23d of October, 1792, Dr. Belknap, at the request of the Massachusetts Historical Society, delivered a centennial discourse, intended to commemorate the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. In this discourse, after giving an account of the preparatory steps, and the final discovery of the continent, he proceeds to consider the effect it has had on the advancement of science, and on the civil and religious liberty of mankind. Some considerable extracts are given from this portion of the discourse :

“ It is both amusing and instructive to review our former notions of liberty, both civil and religious ; and to see what imperfect ideas we had on these subjects, derived by tradition from our European ancestors. Like them, we boasted of *English* liberty ; as if Englishmen had some exclusive rights, beyond any other people, on the face of the earth. And what was English liberty ? Its origin must be sought in ancient charters, and particularly in *magna charta*, granted by, or rather forced from, one of the worst princes that ever disgraced a throne. The liberties of Englishmen, after the Norman Conquest, were the grants of their kings ; and the prerogative was the claim of those kings to power and dominion supposed to be founded on a divine right.



“In the early stages of our controversy, we had formed an idea of liberty, as an inheritance, descended to us from our ancestors, who were Englishmen ; some of whom, when they quitted England, had received of the then reigning prince, charters under the great seal ; by which it was supposed that their privileges were confirmed to them and their posterity ; and the colonies which had these charters plumed themselves on possessing more and greater privileges than those styled royal provinces, which were governed by temporary commissions from the crown, revocable at the royal pleasure.

“In like manner, our title to religious freedom was supposed to be derived, partly from the same charters and commissions ; in which, liberty of conscience was *granted* by the king to such of his subjects as should settle in the plantations ; partly from acts of toleration, made in England, and construed to extend to the colonies ; and partly from our own laws made to favor the religious opinions and practices of those who dissented from the majority. Religious liberty was not placed on its right foundation, nor derived from its true source. The world was not obliged to the statesman or the divine, for the first acknowledgment of this darling right ; but to the spirit of commerce, and to the interested views of the merchant. Religious toleration was introduced into the European countries for the benefit of trade. When the merchants of Holland struck out

the idea, it was regarded by their neighbors with the same horror as a pestilence. It was imported into England with William, Prince of Orange, under whose patronage it was formed into a law ; but it has never been there so extensively admitted, as to put all sects and parties on an equal footing.

\* \* \* \* \*

“But though imperfection is more or less interwoven with all human constitutions, yet a spirit of improvement is evidently pervading this country. Several of the first forms of government which were made for these states have been reviewed and amended. Religious tests have been gradually abolished ; and our national form of government is entirely free from them. It leaves religion where all civil government ought to leave it,—to the consciences of individuals, under the control of the Supreme Lord.

\* \* \* \* \*

“From our example of a government founded on the principle of representation, excluding all family pretensions and titles of nobility, other nations are beginning to look into their natural and original rights as *men*, and to assert and maintain them against the claims of despotism. As far as the present struggle in Europe against civil and spiritual usurpation is conducted on virtuous principles, we cordially wish it success. But have we not reason to fear that the cause of liberty may be injured

by the intemperate zeal of its friends, as much as by the systematic opposition of its enemies? If wisdom, harmony, and fortitude were combined with patriotism on the side of liberty, we might hope that the time was approaching, when an hereditary right to govern a nation would appear as contemptible as the royal touch for the king's evil, and when the loftiest prelates of Europe would find themselves reduced to the same level with the curate of a parish. But what scenes of anarchy and distress may take place before these desirable events, we must wait for time to unfold.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Let us now turn our attention to another subject of debate, arising from the knowledge of this continent. If the Gospel was designed for an universal benefit to mankind, why was it not brought by the apostles to America, as well as propagated in the several regions of the old continent? To solve this difficulty, it has been alleged, that America *was* known to the ancients, and that it was enlightened by the personal ministry of the apostles. With equal propriety it might be solved, by denying that America was at that time inhabited by any human being; and it might not be impossible to maintain this negative position, against any positive proof which can be adduced to the contrary. But both are attended with difficulties which require more light to unravel, than has yet appeared. If America

was peopled at that period, perhaps the state of human society was such, that the wise and benevolent Author of Christianity saw no prospect of success to the propagation of his Gospel here, without the intervention of more and greater miracles than were consistent with divine wisdom or the nature of man to permit.

“ Nearly akin to this, is another difficulty. The native inhabitants of Peru, for some centuries before the Spanish invasion, are represented as worshippers of the sun ; whose universally benignant influence to the world they thought themselves bound to imitate. Accordingly their national character was mild, gentle, and humane. They made no offensive wars ; and when they repelled the invasions of their savage neighbors, and conquered them, it was done with a view to reduce them from their native ferocity, under the government of rational and social principles ; and to incorporate them with themselves, that they might enjoy the benefits of their own pacific system. Their code of laws, delivered by the founder of their empire, was a work of reason and benevolence, and bore a great resemblance to the divine precepts given by Moses, and confirmed by Jesus Christ. In short, they seem to have made the nearest approach to the system of Christianity, I mean the moral part of it, of any people who had never been formally instructed in its principles.

“It would seem, then, to human reason, that they were fit objects for an apostolic mission ; and that, if the pure, simple, original doctrine of the gospel had been preached to them, they would readily have embraced it.

“But when we find that these mild and peaceful people were invaded by avaricious Spaniards, under a pretence of converting them to the catholic faith ; when, instead of the meek and humble language of a primitive evangelist, we see a bigoted friar gravely advancing at the head of a Spanish army, and, in a language unknown to the Peruvians, declaring that their country was given to his nation, by the Pope of Rome, God’s only vicar on earth, and commanding them to receive their new masters on pain of death ; when we consider this parade of arrogant hypocrisy as the signal for slaughter, and see the innocent victims falling by the sword of these ministers of destruction ; when we see the whole nation vanquished, disheartened, and either murdered or reduced to slavery, by their savage conquerors ; when, instead of the worship which they addressed to the luminary of Heaven, and which needed but one step more to conduct them to the knowledge of its invisible Creator, we see the pomp of popish idolatry, with the infernal horrors of the Inquisition, introduced into their country ; our astonishment is excited to the highest degree, and we can only ex-



claim, 'Thy judgments, O Lord, are a great deep ! and thy ways are past finding out !'

"It would give me the greatest pleasure, if, in concluding this discourse, I could say any thing, with respect to the propagation of Christianity among the original natives of America, which could be construed into a fulfilment of the prediction of Daniel, concerning the progress of knowledge.

"Every European nation, which possesses any considerable share of the continent, has made this desirable work a part of their professed design, in planting and settling the country ; and it must be acknowledged that some very zealous and well-meant endeavors have been made by men who had neither wealth nor power in their view ; but the success has not been answerable to the goodness of the design, nor to the wishes of those who have engaged in it. If we survey the whole continent, from the first discovery of America to the present time, the number of converts to Christianity among the Indians bears but a small proportion to those who have been destroyed either by war, by slavery, or by spirituous liquors. And, with respect to many of those who have been called converts, it may justly be inquired, whether any thing more can be said in favor of their conversion, than that they have exchanged their original superstitions for others more glittering and refined.

"If the truths of our holy religion are to be pro-

pagated among the savages, it will become us to consider, whether we had not better first agree among ourselves what these truths are. For whilst they see diversities of opinion among us, and that some of the more zealous advocates of particular tenets are endeavoring to instil the peculiarities of their respective sects among them, and to prejudice them against others ; the native sagacity with which these people are endowed, will lead them to avoid confounding themselves with our distinctions, and to retain the religion of their ancestors, till they can find one more free from perplexity than Christianity appears by the diversity of our opinions concerning it.

“ It is also worthy of consideration, whether the vicious lives and conduct of our own people, and especially those on the frontiers, with whom the Indians are most acquainted, be not a great obstruction to the spreading of divine knowledge among them. It is very natural to estimate the goodness of any religion by the influence which it appears to have on those who profess it ; and, if they are to regard the conduct of the people by whom they have been cheated, robbed, and murdered, as a specimen of the influence of Christianity on the human mind, it would be a greater wonder that they should embrace it than reject it.

“ If the Christian religion is to be propagated, without the assistance of miracles, among the savages

of this continent, it must be in some such manner as the Moravians have attempted. These people seem to have an art of attaching savage nations to their faith and manners, and of forming them into civilized and laborious society, beyond any other denomination of Christians ; and, for the honor of the common cause, I cannot but wish them all that support and encouragement which their zealous and benevolent efforts deserve.

“ It is much to be wished, that the spirit of bigotry and the *shibboleth* of party were totally abolished ; that the Christian religion may appear in its native simplicity and purity ; and that the professors of it would distinguish themselves by that love, that meekness and gentleness, which marked the character of its author and his primitive followers. By these marks all men will know us to be his disciples ; our light will so shine before men, that they will see our good works, and glorify our Father who is in heaven.”

## CHAPTER VII.

1791—1797.

*Historical Society of Massachusetts. — Correspondence with Governor Wentworth. — Ante-Columbian Discovery of America. — Third Volume of the History published. — Attempt to reprint it in a Newspaper prevented. — The Foresters published. — Extract from the Foresters.*

THE history of New England has always been identified with that of its churches, and its ministers have been also its annalists and historians. It is mainly for his successful labors in this department of literature, that Dr. Belknap is entitled to grateful remembrance. Others had collected documents and materials for history from garrets and private repositories; among whom the principal were, Hubbard of Ipswich, Prince of Boston, and also Governor Hutchinson; but neither of these had formed the design of a society, of united efforts, or (if we except Prince's collection in the steeple of Old South Church, part of which was destroyed by the British invaders), of a public place of deposit for the preservation of those frail materials, which without such means are scattered and lost before their true value becomes known.

The Massachusetts Historical Society, instituted in 1791, owes its existence in the first place, undoubtedly, to Dr. Belknap. His historical researches had convinced him of the importance of such an institution, for the collection, preservation, and multiplication of important papers; and the first plan of it is contained in the following sketch, found among his papers, and marked "Plan of an Antiquarian Society, Aug. 1790."

"A society to be formed, consisting of not more than *seven at first*, for the purpose of collecting, preserving, and communicating the Antiquities of America.

"Admissions to be made in such manner as the associated shall judge proper. The number of members to be limited.

"A President, Recording and Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, and Cabinet-keeper to be appointed.

"Each member to pay —— at his admission, and —— yearly. This and other money to be applied to promoting the objects of the society.

"Each member, on his admission, shall engage to use his utmost endeavors to collect and communicate to the society, manuscripts, printed books and pamphlets, historical facts, biographical anecdotes, observations in natural history, specimens of natural and artificial curiosities, and any other matters



which may elucidate the natural and political history of America, from the earliest times to the present day, and —

“All communications which are thought worthy of being preserved shall be entered at large in the books of the society, with an index, and the originals kept on file.

“Letters shall be written to gentlemen in each of the United States, requesting them to form similar societies; and a correspondence shall be kept up between them for the purpose of communicating discoveries to each other.

“Each society through the United States shall be desired from time to time to publish such of their communications as they may judge proper; and all publications shall be made on paper, and in pages of the same size, that they may be bound together, and each society so publishing shall be desired to send gratuitously to each of the other societies one dozen copies at least of each publication.

“Quarterly meetings to be held, for the purpose of communicating; and in this State the quarterly meetings shall be held on the days next following those appointed for the meetings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

“When the society's funds can afford it, salaries shall be granted to the secretaries and other officers.

“Persons to compose the first meeting :

WM. TUDOR, ESQ.,	JAMES WINTHROP, ESQ.,
REV. JOHN ELIOT,	JERE. BELKNAP.”
REV. PETER THACHER,	

To the gentlemen here mentioned were added five others ; and their first publications were made in the *Apollo* for 1792, a weekly paper printed by Belknap and Young. The former was Dr. Belknap's eldest son, then in business for himself.

In 1794 the society was incorporated by the name of the Massachusetts Historical Society : the number of members at this time was twenty-nine. The first president was Hon. James Sullivan ; the Rev. James Freeman was the recording, and Dr. Belknap the corresponding secretary. The library and museum were deposited in an apartment in Faneuil Hall, and were removed subsequently to an upper chamber over the Boston Library, in Franklin Place, which was presented to the society by the proprietors of the building.

The usefulness of the library was not limited to such narrow bounds as that of Prince had been by the terms of his will, in which he desires, in order that the collection may be kept entire, “that no person shall borrow any book or paper therefrom.” This Dr. Belknap called imprisoning the books, and considered it a great hindrance to the benefit of the donation, a valuable part of which has since been

released, and, in the possession of the Historical Society, is subject to their more liberal regulations.

In an account of the society contained in an early volume of their collections, they express a desire for the increase of the library and museum, and add as an inducement, "All benefactions will be thankfully acknowledged, and the names of the donors published;" which at the time had a good effect.

According to the plan of the sketch quoted above, there are now similar societies in fourteen other states, as follow :

Maine,	Maryland,
New Hampshire,	Virginia,
Vermont,	North Carolina,
Rhode Island,	South Carolina,
Connecticut,	Georgia,
New York,	Ohio,
Pennsylvania,	Kentucky.

Some of the original materials collected by Dr. Belknap for the society have been lost ; but enough remain to identify him with its promising beginnings, and to indicate that he put it in a right course for the successful pursuit of its objects. He was a constant attendant at its meetings. He began and pursued an extensive correspondence over the country, to enlist help in its designs ; and he contributed the results of his own investigations, not only to the published volumes and the cabinet of the society,

but also to the more widely circulated papers and pamphlets of the day.

Before completing the second volume of his History, Dr. Belknap wrote to Governor Wentworth, then residing in Halifax, for some further information concerning his administration. This letter, the Governor's reply, and their subsequent correspondence, give a pleasing view of the character of a man who was forced, by causes beyond his control, to relinquish the government of New Hampshire, which he administered with integrity, and to the general satisfaction of the inhabitants.

"Boston, March 21st, 1791.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have written you several letters, both while you was in England and since you have been in Nova Scotia, but never had the pleasure of a line in return.

"When the first volume of the History of New Hampshire was printed, I gave one to Mr. John Pierce, to be sent to you. I have also delivered to him several of your books, which I borrowed out of the library at Wolfboro' before it went to wreck with your other property, in our late tumults.

"In the list of subscribers for my second and third volumes, I observe with pleasure your signature. This encourages me to hope, that, as you formerly patronized the work, you will not take it amiss that

I should apply to you for some assistance. I have endeavored to explore every fountain of intelligence that is accessible, and have succeeded in some instances beyond my expectation; nor would I leave any method unattempted by which it is possible for me to obtain as complete a knowledge as possible of the persons and things concerning which I write.

“For that part of the history of which you may say, with the ancient hero of Troy, ‘*quorum pars magna fui*,’ I am furnished with \* \* \* \*

With these and what I shall collect from the public records in New Hampshire, whither I am now going to complete my compilation, and what I have minuted and remember of the transactions of that period, I shall form the chapter of your administration. But I do most sincerely wish that I could converse with you on some of these various topics, because it is my intention and desire to give as candid an account of things as is consistent with truth.

“It is true I always was, and shall appear in this work to be, an advocate for the American side of the question, which was so long in debate with Great Britain, and which is now determined by the Supreme Arbiter. But there were some things done by my countrymen which I did not approve at the time, nor has the length of time which has elapsed altered my opinion. One of these was the havoc of private property made by confiscations. On this and some other circumstances I could enlarge, but



shall say no more than what is necessary to give a just idea of the subject.

\* \* \* \* \*

“If there are any other matters which, in your judgment, I ought to be acquainted with, and which I shall not be able to obtain without your assistance, will you be so good as to mention them to me? I shall receive such communication as a particular favor.

“Our government appears at last to be happily settled, and every friend to virtue and good order must wish it permanency. I hope that twenty-five years of controversy and revolution will be sufficient for the space of time which I have to exist on this globe. Were I to live to the age of Methuselah, I should not wish to see another such period.

“The publication of my work is unavoidably delayed by the severity of the weather, which has made it impossible to procure the paper till spring. It is now making in Pennsylvania, and I have the prospect of receiving it in the course of next month. You need not, therefore, fear that your communications will be too late if they come by the end of May, or beginning of June.

“I am, dear sir, with equal respect and affection as in 1773,

“Your obliged friend and servant,

“J. B.

“To GOV. WENTWORTH, at Halifax.”

## GOVERNOR WENTWORTH'S REPLY.

" Friar Lawrence's Cell,

" Near Halifax, May 15th, 1791.

" MY DEAR SIR,

" It is a long time since I have received such sincere pleasure as your letter of the 21st March has given me ; and I should have acknowledged it by the Alligator frigate, but she sailed so suddenly that there was not time to send to me here (about six miles from town) and return before she got away. Some of the letters you mention to have wrote to me I have answered, particularly those I received in England, and I think once from this country , but conveyances in our small coasters are very uncertain ; the skippers are generally illiterate, and do not think of any thing which does not immediately concern their cargo. By this means correspondence has hitherto been much obstructed.

" The books returned to Mr. Pierce arrived safe during my absence into the woods, on my public duty, which has hitherto generally taken from five to six months in every year, and I find has loaded my constitution with rheumatic complaints, but am in hopes rest and a more comfortable regimen will restore me. These I hope to enjoy this year, being about to sail for England on business that may detain me six months from this country. There and everywhere else, I shall rejoice to render you every

agreeable service in my power ; for although my letters have not reached you, and I have not done my heart justice in writing more frequently, yet be assured, I have not known the least diminution of friendship and affectionate regard toward you ; I accordingly was much pleased on hearing you were continuing the History of New Hampshire, having received so much satisfaction from the first volume, and being myself more interested in the two next.

“ I herewith send you the papers you desire, as far as I can find them. Most of my papers were destroyed during the late tumults ; both public and private were at several times burned ; their loss has been often very inconvenient to me since, and is now particularly regretted, as they might have been useful to you. However, all that remain I confide to your friendly discretion, which will readily suggest \* \* \* \* \* on a review of all my public conduct to this day, I acted with honest zeal for the King’s service, and the real good of his subjects, which I always did, and do now, think are inseparable ; nor did I ever know any intentions to impose arbitrary laws on America, or to establish any system repugnant to British liberty ; and I do verily believe, had true, wise, and open measures been embraced on both sides, that their union would have been many years established, and their prosperity wonderfully increased. The independence having been consented to by the govern-

ment which entrusted me with its powers, I do most cordially wish the most extensive, great, and permanent blessings to the United States, and of course rejoice at the establishment of their federal constitution as a probable means of their happiness. If there is any thing partial in my heart on this case, it is that New Hampshire, my native country, may arise to be among the most brilliant members of the confederation ; as it was my zealous wish, ambition, and unremitted endeavor, to have led her to, among the provinces, while under my administration. For this object, nothing appeared to me too much. My whole heart and fortune were devoted to it, and, I do flatter myself, not without prospect of some success.

“If the bundle of papers prove useful to you, they will therein do me the best service ; if otherwise, I hope their being transmitted will serve to evince my ready disposition toward your wishes, which you may be assured you will find me at all times attached to, with all the steadfastness and zeal of friendship and respect.

“I am, my dear Sir, very truly,

“Your sincere friend,

“J. WENTWORTH.

“REV. JEREMY BELKNAP.”

FROM THE SAME.

"Halifax, June 22d, 1792.

"Be assured, my dear friend, I feel myself happy in your congratulations on my appointment to the government of this province. In every situation of life, the friendship of those I most esteem and respect must be numbered among those things that I most covet."

FROM THE SAME.

"Halifax, 23d October, 1792.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Late last evening, I returned from an expedition in the woods, after thirty-four days' absence; the chief object of which was to open a road from the settlements at Poictou on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, to this place. This has been long wanted, but thought impracticable, from the expense, and the supposed difficulty of the country. Both are, however, overcome, and a good cart-road is cut, made, and bridged, by which the inhabitants of that populous, increasing, and fertile district have an easy communication with the capital, and can enjoy the benefits of its commerce, as well as all the advantages of law and government; of all of which, they were before almost as much deprived as if they had been resident on the White Mountains. This has been accomplished without any burthen on the public, from a revenue which has always been disposed of by governors, but hitherto not appropriated to



such purposes as I think it my duty to apply it. The distance is sixty-eight miles, of which I have cut, bridged, and made entirely, forty, and made the remainder comfortable (except eight miles which was done before), and my funds diminished not £150 currency.

“This business prevented my receiving your letter of 27th August, until this morning. \* \* \* I have only time to give you the preceding reasons for the delay in answering it, and to assure you, I will endeavor to obtain the information you desire about the Ante-Columbian discovery of America.

“I feel a friendly impatience to see the discourse you have this day delivered (the century discourse), and beg you to send me a copy by the first vessel.

“The autumn is now so far advanced, and the various duties of my offices in this government, and in all the others as surveyor-general of the woods, are so urgent, and require so much my immediate attention, that I fear whether it will be in my power to indulge my wishes in a visit to my friends at Portsmouth and Boston, this season. However, I do not yet entirely give up the hopes of so desirable a gratification, which would be unfeignedly increased to me in your friendly embrace ; for I pray you to be assured, I am, my dear Sir,

“Your sincere friend,

“J. WENTWORTH.”

“REV. JEREMY BELKNAP.”

"I forgot to beg your assistance in procuring for me one of the Hebrew grammars published by Judah Monis, late of Harvard College, and used there, while I was an undergraduate. It is intended for my son, who is a student of Brazen Nose College, Oxford, and has a taste for the Hebrew language, in which he made great proficiency while at Westminster school.

"Your friend,

"J. WENTWORTH."

FROM THE SAME.

"Halifax, 7th November, 1793.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Amidst the urgency of public business, exceedingly increased by paying and dismissing upwards of one thousand militia-men, who have been called in as a reinforcement to this garrison, I embrace a few moments afforded me by Mr. Walter, to return my best thanks for your kind letter and the Hebrew grammar, which I shall send to my son by the packet arrived to-day, from New York, on her way to England, which I shall despatch in three days.

"The preparations for defence, and the frequent alarms from New York [of a French invasion], have so continually excited the apprehensions of our inhabitants in this town for three months past,

that my every moment has been occupied. The alacrity and public spirit of our militia has given me great pleasure ; and their orderly behavior, both on their march and while in town, has been equally honorable to themselves, and flattering to me. We have not had one offence tried or complained of. Every division were armed on their arrival in town, and the next day assiduously applied themselves to military exercises with so much zeal and diligence, that their proficiency surprises every body. One company marched one hundred and thirty miles in thirty-five hours. Two other companies, hearing many guns, ran thirteen miles in two hours, to come in time. Instead of drafting to complete the levies, many companies insisted upon their right to come ; and the officers were obliged to draft those that were to remain at home, and complete a second reinforcement when wanted. The Acadians are equally affected as the rest. Since my accession to the government, I have earnestly applied myself to comfort and establish them, by granting lands without fees, appointing magistrates among them, calling them to the grand juries and town offices, enrolling them in the militia, and aiding their priests. They sent me seventy-five volunteers upon this occasion, under command of an English half-pay officer : on their arrival, I gave the same arms and allowances as the rest. Their old captain told me they now first found themselves the same as Englishmen,

and were perfectly happy, and would be as faithful to the king and province as any men in it. I confess recovering these poor people to their own happiness, and as the old man said to me, that I had made them forget all the miseries their people had formerly suffered, gives me infinitely more comfort than any other thing since my administration. I know your benevolent heart will not only rejoice, but also congratulate me on this event."

FROM THE SAME.

"Halifax, 24th July, 1795.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"The multiplied importunities of urgent business have lately interrupted the gratifications derived to me from private correspondence, and, among others, prevented my writing to you as often as I wished. I will no longer be restrained, however, from so pleasing an intercourse ; more especially as it is, and has been some time, my wish to express to you the solid comfort resulting to me, in these distracted times, when the mighty power of France is madly employed to destroy our religion, and thereby bury social order, with all its beauties and blessings, in barbarian ruins, from recollecting a sermon you preached at Dover, in New Hampshire, when I reviewed a regiment of militia there. In

that discourse, you convinced me, that the kingdom of Christ required not arms for its defence or support, nor could possibly be subverted by them. From that hour my mind was satisfied, and I now am fully persuaded, that the unexampled efforts of the French to exterminate Christianity will not only be frustrated by the decrees of Heaven, but that it will be more signally established and extended by their malice ; and, of course, that safety, benevolence, and all the other endearing charities of life, will still be preserved under that great shelter. Thus, although I see the ruinous torrent deluge many countries, yet I am persuaded, that bounds are set to their devastations, which cannot be passed. Where these bounds may be appointed, cannot be foreseen,—I most devoutly hope, beyond the Atlantic, and that the pestilence may not prevail in America. It would be a sin truly diabolical, to plunge in darkness and horror the fair prospects which now shine on the American union.

“In the course of your studies relative to the History of New Hampshire, it is possible you may have met with some papers or anecdotes concerning my family. If any have occurred, or that you can procure for me, they will be of great use, and most exceedingly oblige me especially— \* \* \*

“I know not how to apologize for asking this favor, which is so very interesting to me ; but, in your kindness and friendship, I trust for excuse, and in



your extensive information for success, which will be thankfully considered by, my dear Sir,

“Your sincere friend,

J. WENTWORTH.

“P.S. Should any expense occur in procuring copies, searching records, *or otherwise*, I will gladly repay it.

“J. W.”

FROM THE SAME.

“Halifax, Nova Scotia, Sept. 15th. 1797.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I am indeed exceedingly obliged and happy in your kind letter of the 17th August, which came to my hands the 12th inst. The inclosures are very acceptable to me, and I also beg to repeat my thanks for those communications you sometime since sent to me : those respecting my family, though not equal to legal evidence, yet had a good use in satisfying those who were to determine that my claims were well founded ; and the deficiency of formal proof was supplied by the gracious commands of my sovereign, in whose wisdom our constitution places plenary powers in such cases. The interest your friendship kindly takes in my happiness, justifies me in mentioning, that, in the honors lately conferred, an addition to my arms was granted, signifying ability and fidelity in the public service. These, however, merited more by honest zeal than

brilliant execution, are a pleasing mark of approbation upon principles applicable to all forms of government. The next to this, I rejoice in and am proud of the affectionate remembrance of my old friend, the highly respected President of the United States, and with perfect sincerity reciprocate his kind expression ; for it is certain ‘ I always loved John Adams.’ Our youth was spent in confidence and intimacy, which discovered to me so many virtues and such preëminent abilities, that they created an esteem which has not since been estranged, and still affords me many hours of comforting reflection. Perhaps no man can entertain a more exalted opinion of our friend’s political wisdom than I do ; nor is it impossible that it may exceed the wisdom of those you designate [the crowned heads of Europe] : the most of them I really believe it does. In that description, however, we have seldom the means of a due appreciation. Their wisdom is often imputed to others, and the reverse in its defect, redoubling the balance against their reputation. You could not more safely anticipate my concurrence, than in the sentiment that my classmate is the most perfect choice that could mark the good sense and sound judgment of the United States. Nor are my best wishes wanting for his prosperous and long administration : therein, I verily believe, is included the greatest good that can be wished for the United States of America. \* \* \* \* \*

“I may not reasonably enlarge this long letter with apologies. It is most my interest to commit myself to your friendship, which has always been very good and very dear to

“Your faithful and obedient servant,

“J. WENTWORTH.”

FROM THE SAME.

“Halifax, Nova Scotia, 23d March, 1798.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“An unexpected urgency requiring the immediate sailing of the brig Earl of Moira, I have not a moment (which literally is my own) ; but I will snatch one wherein to thank you for your late very kind and acceptable letter, and to ask acceptance of the picture of my late Grandfather, which you mentioned. It is an original, and well executed. I am much flattered by its intended situation among the good men of my native country, to which I shall never cease to bear an honest affection. [This picture is in the collection of the Historical Society.]

“You will have received the European news by the Halifax packet, arrived at New York, probably before it reached us, and therefore it will be unnecessary to trouble you on that subject, if time

remained more than to assure you of the sincere regard and esteem of, Reverend and dear sir,

“Your faithful friend,

“J. WENTWORTH.

“P. S. I have directed to you a pamphlet published by the late province of New York relative to their contest with New Hampshire for Vermont. Possibly it may be acceptable for your Historical Society's collection, to which I shall gladly embrace any occasions that may arise of contributing my mite.

J. W.

“REV. JEREMY BELKNAP.”

The result of the inquiry instituted by Governor Wentworth concerning the ante-Columbian discovery of America, as given in the advertisement to the second volume of American Biography, is, that no vestige of a settlement nor of grape-vines could be found; and though the tale has been more recently related by Mr. Wheaton, in his History of the Northmen, it is since put at rest by the following note, in the first volume of “Scandinavia,” by Crichton and Wheaton, Edinburgh, 1838, page 23:

“The alleged discovery of North America, under the name of Vinland, by the Scandinavians, in the year 1002, is not worthy of credence. The error appears to have been the work of some designing interpolator of the old Icelandic M.S. Chronicles.”

In page 163 of the same History, is the following

reference : " See an interesting dissertation on the alleged discovery of America by the Scandinavians, by J. H. Schroeder, in the Svea for 1818, tom. i. p. 197, a periodical published at Upsala."

In 1792 Dr. Belknap published the third and last volume of the History of New Hampshire. No sooner was this work, which had cost so much time and labor, completed, than an editor of a newspaper in Keene attempted to profit by it at the expense of the author, to which end he published the following notice :

" In order to render this paper as useful and entertaining as possible, the editor proposes in a few weeks to commence upon the Rev. Mr. Belknap's late History of New Hampshire, and continue a small part of the same weekly. As every member of the community is equally interested in this much-approved History, the editor flatters himself that the above attempt to please will meet with the approbation of his generous patrons. This information is given to accommodate those who have a desire of becoming subscribers for the Cheshire Advertiser, that they may apply in season, and not be disappointed of the first part of this valuable History."

This information reaching Dr. Belknap, through the kindness of his friend, Mr. Isaiah Thomas, of Worcester, occasioned the following letter to the gentleman so desirous to please his customers :



"Boston, April 21st, 1792.

"To Mr. \_\_\_\_\_,

"Editor of the Cheshire Advertiser.

"I have observed in your paper of the 4th inst., that you have promised your customers 'to commence upon the Rev. Mr. Belknap's History of New Hampshire, and continue a small part of the same weekly, to accommodate those who have a desire of *becoming* subscribers for the Cheshire Advertiser, &c.' As I am particularly interested in the success of that literary adventure, I beg you would set me down as a subscriber for the Cheshire Advertiser for one year, to commence from the first portion of the said History which you may reprint, and send the papers to me regularly by the post. If you are desirous of reprinting the certificate from the Clerk of the Federal Court, which secures the copyright of the said History to me and my heirs, agreeably to the laws of the United States, be so good as to let me know it, and I will send you an authenticated copy.

"I am, sir, your very humble servant,

"JEREMY BELKNAP."

Thus, for a time, the threatened invasion of his rights was repelled; but, a few years after, a New York printer was more successful in selling a Geography, into which were transcribed large portions of the work; and though an attempt was made to

obtain some remuneration from him, it was found nothing but the application of the law would have any effect; and, this being too expensive a mode of settlement, the injury remained without redress.

In this year also Dr. Belknap published "The Foresters, an American tale, being a sequel to the History of John Bull the Clothier, in a series of letters to a friend." It appeared first in successive numbers of the Columbian Magazine, and was afterwards collected into a volume, which passed through two editions during the author's life. This little book gives a humorous account of the first settlement of the country, and the troubles with Great Britain; it was printed anonymously, the copyright being secured by the publishers. The second edition was printed in 1796, and two letters were added, continuing the story to that time.

A description of the hostility of Massachusetts towards the Quakers and Anabaptists, and of the expulsion of the former from the state, is given in the third letter as follows. It is headed, "John Codline quarrels with Roger Carrier, and turns him out of doors."

"John's family grew, and he settled his sons as fast as they became of age, to live by themselves; and when any of his old acquaintance came to see him, he bade them welcome, and was their very good friend, *as long as they continued to be of his mind*, and no longer; for he was a very pragmatistical sort

of a fellow, and loved to have his own way in every thing. This was the cause of a quarrel between him and Roger Carrier ; for it happened that Roger had taken a fancy to dip his head into water,\* as the most effectual way of washing his face, and thought it could not be made so clean in any other way. John, who used the common way of taking water in his hand to wash his face, was displeased with Roger's innovation, and remonstrated against it. The remonstrance had no other effect than to fix Roger's opinion more firmly ; and as a farther improvement on his new plan, he pretended that no person ought to have his face washed till he was capable of doing it himself, without any assistance from his parents. John was out of patience with this addition, and plumply told him that, if he did not reform his principles and practice, he would fine him, or flog him, or kick him out of doors. These threats put Roger on inventing other odd and whimsical opinions. He took offence at the letter X, and would have had it expunged from the alphabet, because it was the shape of a cross, and had a tendency to introduce Popery.† He would not do his duty at a military muster, because there was an X in the colors. After a while he began to scruple the lawfulness of bearing arms and killing wild

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\* Anabaptists.

† Roger Williams' zeal against the sign of the Cross.

beasts. But, poor fellow ! the worst of all was, that being seized with a shaking-palsy\* which affected every limb and joint of him, his speech was so altered that he was unable to pronounce certain letters and syllables as he had been used to do. These oddities and defects rendered him more and more disagreeable to his old friend, who, however, kept his temper as well as he could, till one day, as John was saying a long grace over his meat, Roger kept his hat on the whole time. As soon as the ceremony was over, John took up a case-knife from the table, and gave Roger a blow on the ear with the broad side of it ; then with a quick, rising stroke, turned off his hat. Roger said nothing, but, taking up his hat, put it on again ; at which John broke out into such a passionate speech as this : ‘ You impudent scoundrel ! is it come to this ? Have I not borne with your whims and fidgets these many years, and yet they grow upon you ? Have I not talked with you time after time, and proved to you as plain as the nose in your face, that your notions are wrong ? Have I not ordered you to leave them off, and warned you of the consequences ; and yet you have gone on from bad to worse ? You began with dipping your head into water, and would have all the family do the same, pretending there was no other way of washing the face. You would have

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\* Quakers.

had the children go dirty all their days, under pretence that they were not able to wash their own faces, and so they must have been as filthy as the pigs till they were grown up. Then you would talk your own balderdash lingo, *thee and thou, and nan forsooth*; and now you must keep your hat on when I am at my devotions, and I suppose would be glad to have the whole family do the same! There is no bearing with you any longer; so now, hear me, I give you fair warning: if you don't mend your manners, and retract your errors, and promise reformation, I'll kick you out of the house. I'll have no such refractory fellows here. I came into this forest for *reformation*, and reformation I *will* have.'

" 'Friend John,' said Roger, 'dost not thou remember, when thou and I lived together in friend Bull's family, how hard thou didst think it to be compelled to look on thy book all the time that the hooded chaplain was reading the prayers, and how many knocks and thumps thou and I had for offering to use our liberty, which we thought we had a right to do? Didst thou not come hitherunto for the sake of enjoying thy liberty? and did not I come to enjoy mine? Wherefore, then, dost thou assume to deprive me of the right which thou claimest for thyself?'

" 'Don't tell me,' answered John, 'of right and of liberty; you have as much liberty as any



man ought to have. You have liberty to do right, and no man ought to have liberty to do wrong.'

" 'Who is to be judge,' replied Roger, 'of what is right or what is wrong? Ought not I to judge for myself? Or thinkest thou it is thy place to judge for me?'

" 'Who is to be judge?' said John, 'why, *the book* is to be judge; and I have proved by the book over and over again, that you are wrong; and therefore you are wrong, and you have no liberty to do any thing but what is right.'

" 'But, friend John,' said Roger, 'who is to judge whether thou hast proved my opinions or conduct to be wrong — thou or I?'

" 'Come, come,' said John, 'not so close, neither; none of your idle distinctions. I *say* you are in the wrong; I have *proved* it, and *you know* it. You have sinned against your own conscience, and therefore you deserve to be cut off as an incorrigible heretic.'

" 'How dost thou know,' said Roger, 'that I have sinned against my own conscience? Canst thou search the heart?'

" At this John was so enraged that he gave him a smart kick, and bade him begone out of his house, and off his lands, and called after him to tell him, that, if ever he should catch him there again, he would knock his brains out."

## CHAPTER VIII.

1794—1797.

*American Biography Published.* — *Judge Jay's Opinion.* — *Extracts from the Preface of Hubbard's New Edition.* — *Letter to Mr. Hazard.* — *General Knox.* — *Dissertations, Extract.* — *Psalms and Hymns.* — *Letter from a Gentleman of Portland.* — *Dislike to Controversy.* — *Anecdotes.*

IN January, 1794, the first volume of the American Biography was published, entitled, "An Historical Account of those Persons who have been distinguished in America as Adventurers, Statesmen, Philosophers, Divines, Warriors, Authors, and other remarkable characters." The first biography is that of Biorn, the discoverer of Vinland, in 1001; and the volume concludes with Henry Hudson, who, in the endeavor to find a north-west passage, discovered Spitzbergen in 1607, embracing a period of six hundred years.

Biography, says a contemporary writer, "was a literary path hitherto unexplored in this country," when entered upon by Dr. Belknap. "No apology," says the author, "is necessary for this work, if its utility be admitted;" and this, time has abundantly

proved. His previous historical studies and pursuits, as well as his accuracy and impartiality, eminently qualified him for its successful accomplishment. A letter from Judge Jay to Dr. Belknap, upon the subject, contains the following sentence :

“ To succeed in Biography has not been common. To collect, select, and arrange the necessary materials, requires time and industry, as well as judgment ; and it always appeared to me to be a matter of regret, that although reputation was more valuable than property, yet less care and accuracy were generally used in deciding on the former, than on the latter.”

A new edition of this work was published by Harper and Brothers, in 1842 ; the editor of which, Mr. F. M. Hubbard, gives the following testimony to the correctness and fidelity of the author :

“ In preparing a new edition of a work so highly esteemed for its exactness and impartiality, the editor has had a twofold labor. He has reëxamined all the statements of facts made by Dr. Belknap, and compared them with the authorities he used, and with others which were not accessible when he wrote. It has been very seldom that he has found occasion to differ from Dr. Belknap, and that most frequently in cases in which documents recently discovered have thrown light upon subjects which the want

of them rendered necessarily obscure. It is believed that no work has been published of such magnitude, embracing such a variety of persons and events, and extending over a period of more than six hundred years, in which so few, and those so unimportant, errors are to be found. The manuscript collections yet remaining, from which the work was originally written, prove a degree of careful diligence, and a discriminating and impartial judgment, which have been rarely exercised by the historical inquirer."

The first suggestion of this work is contained in a letter from Dr. Belknap to his friend Mr. Hazard, in 1779. He says:

"There is one thing I intended to mention to you, which, if it meet with your approbation, may serve as an underplot to your general design [of the State Papers]. In the course of your travels through the continent, and researches into antiquity, you will naturally become acquainted with the characters of many persons whose memories deserve regard, either as statesmen, scholars, patriots, or otherwise. Might not a collection of these, in the form of a biographical dictionary, be an useful work? I have had thoughts of such a thing, and have made the beginning of a small attempt to execute it; but as your opportunities for perfecting such a plan are much superior to what mine are, or will probably

ever be, I will gladly resign to you whatever I have done, or can hereafter do, toward it."

Mr. Hazard's reply contains the following :

"I am charmed with your proposal of an American Biographical Dictionary, and will cheerfully contribute towards it any aid in my power ; but upon considering, according to Horace's advice,

*' Quid valeant humeri ferre, quid ferre recusant,'*

I dare not undertake it. When you attend to the magnitude of my present design, and recollect that at the same time I am forming an American Geography, you will see the propriety of my declining it. As you have begun, I wish you would go on with it. It is unjust, and would argue base ingratitude, that the characters of worthy men should be buried with their dust."

The next letter of Dr. Belknap is as follows :

"May 12th, 1779.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am much pleased that my proposal of an American Biographical Dictionary meets with your approbation. The promise of your assistance in carrying it on is a great inducement to proceed in it ; but I had much rather you would take the work



into your own hands. 'The magnitude of your present design' need be no impediment to it, as the materials lie all in your way, and you need only keep a memorandum containing an alphabetical index of names, with reference to the books and papers where the characters or actions of the persons are registered, which may be transcribed at some future period, when your other plans are completed. This is chiefly the method which I have pursued: only where I meet with hints scattered in books or papers which may not be easily collected again, I have copied them. But I have done and can do but little toward it. Confined, as Pope says, to 'lead the life of a cabbage,' unable to stir from the spot where I am planted, burdened with the care of an increasing family, and obliged to pursue the business of my proper station, I have neither time nor advantages to make any improvements in science. If I can furnish hints to those who have leisure and capacity to pursue them, it is as much as I can pretend to. If, upon further consideration, you should think more favorably of being the principal instrument of perfecting the design, I will promise to forward it to the utmost of my power; but, if not, I beg you would not only assist in it yourself, but engage a number of gentlemen in different parts of the continent to make collections for it, and let some person whose situation is more central than mine be appointed to receive them. By

this means, perhaps in a series of time the thing may be done ; but if it lie solely upon me, and I am to continue in my present situation, I am persuaded it never will."

A letter from Mr. Hazard, dated Jamaica Plain, the following August, gives some idea of the difficulties a literary project had to encounter in such troubled times. He says :

"I mentioned the dictionary to Dr. Gordon of this place, Dr. Stiles of New Haven, the Rev. Mr. Tennent of Greenfield, in Connecticut, and I think to several gentlemen in Philadelphia ; but I mentioned it as you preach sermons, in hopes that it might possibly take effect somewhere, but almost despairing of it at the same time. In short, the war, and the numerous avocations consequent upon it, have thrown every man's mind into such an unsettled and confused state, that but few can think steadily upon any subject. They hear of useful designs ; they give you all the encouragement which can be derived from the warmest approbation of your plan ; they will even promise you assistance : politics intrude, and when you appear again, why, they really forgot that the matter had been mentioned to them."

The second volume of the Biography begins with the life of Sir Thomas Smith, treasurer of the Virginia

Company in England, and one of the assignees of Raleigh's patent; and concludes with William Penn. Dr. Belknap lived to complete it, but not to see it published; the printing being in progress at the time of his decease.

Dr. Belknap's patriotism was active and vigilant to repel all assaults upon the honor of his country. General Knox, Secretary of War, on resigning his office, addressed a letter to the President, Dec. 29th, 1794, in which he lamented that "our modes of population had been more destructive to the Indian natives than the conduct of the conquerors of Mexico and Peru." This unjust aspersion roused Dr. Belknap in defence of his country, and he wrote a letter to General Knox, which was printed in the *Columbian Centinel*, of 24th January, 1795, showing that the first settlers had bought their land and paid the Indians for it, and had made great efforts to civilize and christianize them; and that the decrease of their number was not owing to the causes to which the General attributed it. Another instance of this watchfulness and care of the honor of the United States is the correction of an error of Dr. Kippis respecting the conduct of the American Congress with regard to Captain Cook, which was published at the time in the *Collections of the Historical Society*, vol. iv. p. 79, &c.

In 1795, Dr. Belknap published "Dissertations on the Character, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus

Christ, and the Evidence of his Gospel ; with Remarks on some sentiments advanced in a book entitled ‘The Age of Reason.’ ”

This compendium, designed for those who have not leisure or opportunity to look into more voluminous works, does not pretend to any new arguments. An extract from the first dissertation, on the nature of that evidence by which the Gospel is supported, will give an idea of the manner of reasoning pursued in it.

“ Where there is a prospect of advantage, and of such vast, unspeakable advantage as the happiness of a future state, — a subject which has engaged the attention of good men in all ages, — surely it is rational to admit that degree of moral evidence which is founded on credible testimony, — on testimony which cannot be contradicted by any testimony of equal credibility, and from the certainty of which no deduction can be made by any reasonable evidence of a contrary truth.

“ Such is the kind of evidence, and such is the degree of that kind of evidence, on which the facts which involve the gospel hope of eternal life are grounded. It is the evidence of testimony ; the testimony of Jesus Christ and his apostles. Jesus Christ came from heaven into this world, and pointed out to us the path of life by his doctrine and example. Having delivered his testimony, and confirmed it by a series of the most wonderful and beneficial works which were ever seen and known in this world ;

having voluntarily yielded himself to the power of death, and submitted to be laid in the grave ; he hath resumed his life, and returned to heaven. Of all this there is sufficient evidence ; there is written evidence ; there is evidence from the written testimony of credible witnesses, who could not be mistaken, because they did not believe it themselves until, after doubting, they were convinced by the most infallible and demonstrative proof ; and who could have no interest in deceiving us, because they have ventured their own happiness on the credibility of the same truths. If, then, we have any idea of the benefit which is proposed to us by believing in Jesus Christ, and obeying his Gospel ; if we have any value for that salvation which is there revealed, ought we not to attend to this evidence ? And if it appears reasonable, and we have no contrary evidence to detract from its credibility, is it not wise and prudent for us to admit the truth of the facts, and the importance of the consequences deducible from them ; and, when we have admitted it, to build our hope and expectations on it ? Ought we not to exercise the same judgment and caution on this subject, which we do every day on things of less consequence ? — and at the same time to place that confidence, and entertain that hope, which shall animate us to exertion ? Hope is the life of all business ; and what nobler hope can we have than the hope of eternal life ? Being persuaded of this



truth, and possessed of this hope, we shall pursue with vigor the path of duty ; and the farther we advance in the way of gospel obedience, the more comfort and satisfaction shall we find : the ‘ righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.’—Job xviii. 9.”

In this year Dr. Belknap issued his collection of Psalms and Hymns. This compilation was gathered from a wider range of authors than those which it superseded ; it was extensively used by the Congregational churches of New England for many years, and more recent compilers have acknowledged its value by transferring a large portion of its contents to their pages. The author says, in his preface :

“In this selection, those Christians who do not scruple to sing praises to their Redeemer and Sanctifier will find materials for such a sublime enjoyment ; whilst others, whose tenderness of conscience may oblige them to confine their addresses to the Father only, will find no deficiency of matter suited to their idea of ‘ the chaste and awful spirit of devotion.’ ”

Several of the hymns are of his own composition. Indeed, he frequently wrote occasional verses for the entertainment of himself and friends ; but, as he never considered these ephemeral productions as of any great value, it has been thought best not to introduce any of them into this volume, with the exception of a fragment found among his papers

after his decease, which was published in the obituary notices of him at the time, and is inserted in its appropriate place.

The readiness of Dr. Belknap to help all who needed or asked his assistance was remarkable, and induced applications from more indolent persons, who would gladly have availed themselves of his labors, instead of their own exertions. As an instance of this, a gentleman wrote him a letter from Portland, to the following effect :

“ I am preparing something which will soon be delivered to the public. I find myself exceedingly cramped by the want of books this way. My own library is trifling. Will you permit me, for a moment, to intrude upon your precious time, devoted to religion and science, by the following requests ?

“ I wish to have, from your pen, a short sketch of *the rise and progress of the causes which finally produced the declaration of independence*, 4th of July, '76. The favor shall be thankfully and *publicly* acknowledged. What men of science have emigrated to this country since the revolution ?

“ *If within a week*, Sir, after the reception of this letter, you will be so kind as to gratify me in my requests, you will confer an essential obligation upon me.

“ Reverend Sir,

“ With perfect esteem and obligation,

“ I am yours, *for ever.*”

This modest request was made to one who, “not by slighting any of the public or private duties of his office, but by superior economy of time and industry, seizing the early hours of the day, superior to the enticements of indolence, abhorring idleness, finishing whatever study or inquiry he had begun, and using recreations and visits as preparations for serious pursuits, redeemed leisure to carry his researches into other fields of literature, suited to gratify his taste, and increase his usefulness.”—(Dr. Kirkland on Dr. Belknap.)

The delay of the above letter rendered the application unavailing, as it did not reach Dr. Belknap until after the time had elapsed within which an answer would have been of use.

Of the constant and full occupation of his time, he says, in a letter to Dr. Lettsom :

“I know what it is to have *full* employment, and that a man who wishes to fill up his time with duty is obliged to husband his hours, and even to borrow some from sleep to accomplish his purposes. Were it possible to buy time from idlers and loungers, there might be an accommodating bargain on both sides ; but, in the present state of things, we must be thankful that we can get time to do good in any way, as well as sorry we can do no more. He who ‘went about doing good’ will know how to estimate our services to his brethren, and will take it all as done to himself.”

Dr. Belknap's dislike to controversy is pleasantly shown in the reply to the following note :

“KIND SIR,

“In the year 1780 I printed a piece against your discourse from John xviii. : ‘If my kingdom were of this world,’ &c. ; and in that piece I handled you severely.

“Now if you was right, I have done very wrong, and it is expedient that my piece should be answered, if capable of an answer : therefore, if you are able, you will kindly undertake an answer, or to show the error. Otherwise, my cause is established, and you are found in an egregious deception.

“Nov. 9th, 1796.

W. S.”

ANSWER.

“If Mr. S. is disposed to enter into controversy, he is very unfortunate in the choice of an antagonist ; for if his performance has passed sixteen years without a reply, it is not probable that it will receive any at this distance of time, when both that and the sermon which gave occasion for it, are almost forgotten. Those who have read them can judge for themselves.”

There are several anecdotes preserved which illustrate Dr. Belknap's character. The following was related to the writer by Rev. Dr. Parkman :

"A clergyman of a neighboring town, who was a native of Charlestown, had been very imprudent, when young, in building a house beyond his means, and was very unhappy that he could not pay the laborers employed upon it. He went to see his friend, and told him his troubles, not without a few tears, for he was easily moved. Dr. Belknap, after hearing his story, took from his desk and gave him a classical medal, with an unfinished or broken tower upon it, and a motto, signifying the wisdom of one who commences no more than he is able to complete ; as though he would say to him, for he was himself poor, ' Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I unto thee.' The clergyman went away, feeling that he had received a rebuke, mild and classical, but nevertheless a rebuke from his friend. In a few days came round the Thursday Lecture ; after which, Dr. Belknap sought his friend, and said to him,

"You must dine to-day with Mr. Thomas Russell, the rich merchant."

"I do not know him, I am afraid to go," was the reply.

"But you must : he expects you, and politeness requires that you should."

Conquering his timidity, the clergyman accepted



the invitation ; and after dinner, Mr. Russell inquired into the state of his affairs, and when he was informed, asked what sum would relieve him.

“ I do not know,” was the reply ; “ but I think four hundred dollars would make me a happy man.”

The benevolent merchant gave him a check for five hundred dollars, saying :

“ You may repay it when you are able, and never, if you are never able. Dr. Belknap told me of your distress, and I am happy to be able to relieve you.”

During the revolution, while poverty pressed heavily upon nearly all the inhabitants, a man in Dover had the large buttons on his coat made of sole leather, and came to show them to Dr. Belknap.

“ There,” said he, pointing to his leather substitutes, “ you see I am not proud : I have leather buttons.”

“ I see no proof of that,” was the reply ; “ I think you are proud of your humility.”

A rough countryman asked him, one day, if he really believed there was such a man as Job. The Doctor took the Bible, and bade him read.

“ There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job.”

“ You see the Bible says so.”

“ So it does,” drawled out the man ; “ and I am sure I don ’t know any thing to the contrary.”

“Neither do I,” said Dr. Belknap, and thus ended the inquiry.

In a mixed company, hearing a person speak in a very free manner against the Christian religion, he asked,

“Have you found one that is better?” And, the reply being in the negative, added,

“When you do, let me know, and I will join you in adopting it.”

## CHAPTER IX.

1796 — 1798.

*Convention Sermon.*—*Missionary visit to the Oneida Indians.*—*Letters from Dr. Clarke.*—*Correspondence with Mrs. John Adams.*—*Expedition to Cuttyhunk.*—*Last Illness and Death.*—*Character.*—*Theological Opinions.*—*Notice of Mrs. Belknap.*—*Dr. Belknap's Life of Dr. Watts.*

DR. BELKNAP'S sermon before the convention of the clergy in Boston, May 26th, 1796, has been referred to previously, as giving a fair representation of the trials of a minister in our community at that period, many of which are equally real at the present time, as a few extracts will prove.

“Both our public performances and our private conversation are exposed to the attacks of malicious, cavilling, and prejudiced tempers ; and he must be more than human, who can behave so uprightly and circumspectly as in all cases to avoid giving offence, especially when we consider that we can recommend no duty but what some person neglects, and condemn no sin but what some person commits.”

Concerning the treatment of political subjects in the pulpit, he makes the following observations :

“Another of the afflictions to which we are ex-

posed is the resentment of pretended patriots, when we oppose their views in endeavoring to serve our country. There is a monopolizing spirit in some politicians, which would exclude clergymen from all attention to matters of state and government ; which would prohibit us from bringing political subjects into the pulpit, and even threaten us with the loss of our livings, if we move at all in the political sphere. But, my brethren, I consider politics as indirectly connected with morality, and both with religion. If the political character of a people is bad, their morals are equally bad, and their religion is good for nothing. The same man who appears in the character of a politician is also a subject of moral government, and a candidate for immortality. Therefore, if he act right or wrong as a politician, he acts equally right or wrong as a subject of God's moral government ; his character as a politician will be brought into the grand review at the last day, and his future state will be determined accordingly. This doctrine, I am sensible, is not agreeable to the practice of some men, who act with a tolerable regard to the principles of morality in their common business ; but, when they get into a political body, relax their ideas of morality, and endeavor to carry a point by any means whatever. Against such an idea of politics I think it my duty to protest ; for I believe that honesty is the best policy, both in private and public life. \* \* \* \*

“It is very strange that we may not preach on the same subjects which are recommended to us as subjects of prayer. In the annual proclamations for fasts and thanksgivings, we are exhorted to pray and give thanks on a great variety of political subjects, foreign and domestic. And what good reason can be given why the same subjects should not be discoursed on, as well as prayed over? It is expected, that we bring them into the pulpit in our prayers, and it is by some people highly resented if we do not. When we have them in our mind as proper subjects for devotion, why should we not speak and discourse on them for the instruction of our hearers? Must we make an address to God on political subjects, and may we not make an address to our brethren on the same subjects? I would not be guilty of so strange an inconsistency.

“It should be considered that we are men of like passions with others. We feel ourselves interested equally with our brethren in the same religious, moral, and political matters; and where there is freedom of speech, as I trust there always will be in this happy country, we ought not to be blamed if we use the liberty of Americans to speak our minds at proper times, and in a decent manner, on political as well as on moral and religious topics.

“But ‘there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, though their teeth are as swords!’ And how liberal are some tongues, some pens, and



some presses, with their abuse, when we appear warm and zealous in the cause of our country ! When we speak or write in support of its liberties, its constitution, its peace, and its honor, we are stigmatized as busybodies, as tools of a party, as meddling with what does not belong to us, and usurping authority over our brethren.

“ Whatever may be the views of those who are of a different opinion from me respecting this matter, yet I consider their principle, that the clergy have no right to meddle with politics, and their endeavor to stop our mouths, as ‘ pregnant with mischief,’ tending to keep the people in ignorance, and exposing them to be misled by those who would always pretend that the people shall govern, provided that they shall govern the people.

“ The time has been when some of these same persons were very fond of engaging the clergy in politics, encouraging them to write and preach, or, to use a phrase of their own, ‘ blow the trumpet,’ in defence of the liberties of their country. But, alas ! how changed, how fallen ! From such politicians and such patriots, the good Lord deliver us ! ”

The phrase, “ blow the trumpet,” is taken from the thirty-third chapter of the prophet Ezekiel, where it is made the duty of a watchman to give warning of an approaching enemy by this means ; and during the revolution it was applied to the clergy, who were urged to encourage and support

the people, by preaching in aid of the cause of liberty.

The following paragraph is not without more modern application :

“ It is a fact, confirmed by long and repeated experience, that the work which we are obliged to do, and the trials which we are called to endure, are more wasting to the health and spirits, than any kind of bodily labor which men usually perform. Exercise of body tends to confirm and establish the health ; but the exercise of the mind, which falls to our lot, often proves ruinous to the health, and wears away the constitution in a most unaccountable manner. The thoughtfulness, the watchfulness, the self-denial, the anxiety, the close application, and intense stretch of the mental powers, in deep study and contemplation, which form an essential part of our work, are exercises unknown to the bulk of mankind. If, on any particular occasion, they are called to such kind of labor, how painful and tedious is it to them, and how eagerly do they embrace the first opportunity to get rid of it ! But it is our constant employment. The inward labor of our mind, our conflicts with our own corruptions, and our application to sacred studies, are objects which the world does not see, and therefore can form no idea of them. Our public discourses are the result of deep thought and strict inquiry ; and yet how often does it happen, that those discourses

are least regarded ; whilst the tinsel trumpery of him ‘ that beateth the air ’ is admired as the perfection of wisdom and rhetoric ! The beaten oil of the sanctuary is quickly consumed, and its light appears to have been spent in vain ; whilst the twinkling of an *ignis fatuus* shall draw after it crowds of admirers ! If our brethren did but know the labor, the patience, the self-application, the trials and discouragements which fall to our lot, they would pity us, and pray for us, rather than think our work light and easy.”

In 1796, the Board of Commissioners of the Society established in Scotland, for Propagating Christian Knowledge, chose Dr. Belknap and Dr. Morse a committee to visit the Indians who were objects of their mission at Oneida and New Stockbridge. This required a long and tedious journey of near six hundred miles in the heat of summer, and occupied nearly a month. Dr. Belknap left Boston on the 9th of June, and returned the 6th of July. The report which was made to the Commissioners was drawn up by him, and is published in the Historical Society’s Collections.

From Boston to Albany was five days’ journey, including the Sabbath, which was passed at Pittsfield, where he preached for Mr. Allen. At New Lebanon, the condition of the Springs seems to have been much the same as now ; they had been in repu-

tation about thirty years, there were several boarding-houses in the vicinity, and a considerable resort of people from all parts.

In going over the mountains in Berkshire, the carriage broke down twice ; but no great damage was done, except a little detention and working in the rain to repair it. An account of this was probably written to his friend, Dr. Clarke, which occasioned the following reply :

“ Our brothers are well, and do not forget you at their social meetings. Do write often, and let all your letters assure us, that, though your carriage breaks down, your bones are whole ; though your beds are hard, your sleep is sound ; though your fare is coarse, your hunger is allayed ; and, though you part with your money, you keep your spirits.”

At Albany he was invited by Lieutenant-Governor Van Rensselaer to lodge at his house, and General Schuyler took him in his carriage to Schenectady ; whereupon Dr. Clarke writes :

“ Before this reaches you, your mind will be at ease, both as to your family and your pulpit. It seems indeed to be at ease already, if I may judge from the tenor of your last letter. Caressed by generals and lieutenant-governors, visiting classic cities and breathing classic air, I think you have

enough to make you happy. How insignificant must Boston have appeared to your imagination when you were at Rome ! What majestic ideas must have possessed your mind when you were at Troy ! And how must Jerusalem have *belittled* all other cities which you have visited in the course of your travels ! I anticipate a most entertaining volume of travels as the fruit of your excursion. Do be very particular in your description of customs and manners. Let your readers know, whether at Rome you did as the Romans do ; whether you met with any Hectors at Troy, or were regaled with pork at Jerusalem.”

The information gained concerning the Indians is contained in the printed report. Dr. Belknap was fully convinced of the hopelessness of the endeavors to make them conform to the religion and mode of life of the Whites ; and this probably induced him to relinquish his connection with the society, which he did, not long after. They had no habits of industry, and thought it degrading to cultivate the soil ; “ they must lay aside the character of hunters, because their game is gone, and its haunts are rendered infinitely more valuable by cultivation. They cannot be warriors, because they have no enemies to contend with. If, therefore, they continue to despise husbandry, the only remaining source of opulence and independence, they must either retire to some



distant region of the American forest, or live as spendthrifts on the price of their lands ; or become strollers and beggars ; till, like their brethren of Natick, they shall cease to have any political existence among mankind."

This melancholy anticipation has been fully realized ; and in the midst of our happy homes and cultivated fields, our civilized society, and our Christian philanthropy, the history of the past will call forth a sigh for the sad destiny of the Indians, the original possessors of our country ; upon whom, notwithstanding the most earnest endeavors to improve their condition, the presence and prosperity of the white man has brought inevitable destruction.

The wife of President Adams was one of the correspondents of Dr. Belknap, during the last months of his life ; and the following are extracts from some of their letters.

FROM MRS. ADAMS.

"Philadelphia, May, 1798.

\* \* \* \* "I take the liberty, Sir, of sending you a work lately reprinted here : it is called "Proofs of a Conspiracy against all the Religions and Governments of Europe, by John Robison, A.M. Professor of Natural Philosophy, and Secretary to the Royal Society of Edinburgh." It ought to be in the hands of every man of science in America, as a key to the mighty revolutions which astonish the

world ; and as a proof, if one could be wanting, that no free government can stand, which is not supported by religion and virtue.

“ That our country may still be preserved from that dissolution of religion, government, and manners, which by the French revolution is spreading through the world, and laying them all prostrate, is devoutly to be prayed for by every friend of humanity. That your health may be preserved and your life of usefulness continued, to aid, as it has hitherto done, both religion and virtue in the world, is the sincere and ardent wish of her who subscribes herself

“ Your friend and humble servant,

“ ABIGAIL ADAMS.”

#### REPLY.

“ Boston, May 30th, 1798.

“ DEAR MADAM,

“ Yesterday morning, I had the honor of writing to the President, and enclosing a copy of my Fast sermon. At noon I had the very great pleasure of voting for him as President of the Academy, and of hearing his election announced by an unanimous vote ; and, before night, I received your obliging favor, with the book enclosed. \* \* \* Your kind wishes for my health and usefulness require my warmest acknowledgments of gratitude.

It is every one's duty, at this critical time, to say and do all in his power to serve his country in its political and religious interests; and I hope I shall not be backward in performing mine. Should there be any services in my power for the cause of truth, virtue, liberty, and humanity, or the public safety, I shall be happy to receive your commands, or those of the man you love best.

“After our last Commencement, I sent Governor Wentworth one of our catalogues, and mentioned to him the pleasure I took in seeing the names of two of my friends printed in capitals, in the class of 1755, and also repeated some expressions of affectionate regard toward him, which I had heard a little before from the President. I added, respecting the latter, that I felt very happy in his advancement to the chief magistracy of the Union, because I believed there was as much, or more political wisdom in his head than in any or all of the crowned heads of Europe. His answer, which was not designed for any eye but mine, I take the liberty of sending for your perusal. (See p. 202.)

“Notwithstanding the dark and threatening aspect in the political hemisphere, yet, under the present executive administration, I have as much tranquillity of mind as Æneas enjoyed when navigating the strait between Italy and Sicily, under the conduct of Palinurus, while Scylla and Charybdis frowned on either side, and Ætna thundered over

his head. I pray most sincerely for the preservation of the life, health, and vigor of our Palinurus, and hope he will not think of a retreat, till, like his friend Washington, he shall have the prospect of a successor to whom the helm may be safely trusted. Let his heart be fixed, and his confidence be in that Almighty power which 'rides the whirlwind and directs the storm.' I think nothing would be a more proper subject of his contemplation than the text of John Cotton's election sermon in 1633, which you may find in the book of Haggai, chap. ii. ver. 4."

The text referred to is this:

"Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts."

FROM MRS. ADAMS.

"Philadelphia, June 11th, 1798.

"DEAR SIR,

"The President was gratified in reading the expressions of friendship and kindness liberally bestowed by the friend and companion of his youthful years. The school and the college are the sources of the dearest friendships; the heart is then open to strong and deep attachments, and, where it meets with congenial sentiments, forms unions which death

itself does not dissolve. I have seen these attachments transferred to the children, and this is one among many other advantages derived from a public education.

“The President joins his friend in the sentiment expressed by him, that kings and princes have not an equal chance with their subjects; from the responsibility of their stations, their knowledge and talents are often unjustly estimated; they are frequently obliged to hear with the ears of those most interested to deceive them, and to see with eyes before which a veil is drawn.

“The President directs me to assure Dr. Belknap that he has no intention of becoming an imitator of Palinurus, by falling asleep, and losing the helm napping; though he will willingly resign it to a more watchful and skilful pilot.”

On the 20th of June, 1797, Dr. Belknap sailed from New Bedford to ascertain, if possible, the island discovered by Gosnold, in 1602, which in the first volume of the American Biography is supposed to be Nashawn. Finding this supposition incorrect, he went himself, with several other gentlemen, to Cuttyhunk, where he had the “supreme satisfaction” to find the remains of the cellar of Gosnold’s storehouse “on an islet in the middle of a pond of fresh water,” as described in Gosnold’s journal.

The more accurate information gained by this



visit to the spot required so great an alteration in the life of Gosnold, which had been given in the first volume, that he re-wrote it for the second, where a description of the island may be found, page 114.

We are now approaching the last scene of Dr. Belknap's life. For a year before his death, he was conscious that each moment might be his last, and he prepared himself and others for the final event. His correspondence during this time frequently expresses the entire uncertainty he felt of the continuance of his earthly existence. Two slight attacks of paralysis, which did not impair his activity of body or mind, impressed him with the necessity of being in readiness for the call of his Divine Master; and he redoubled his diligence, that he might accomplish the more in the short time allowed him. In April, 1798, his friend Dr. Clarke died; and he preached the funeral sermon, and wrote a sketch of his life and character for the Historical Society's Collections. When it appeared in their next publication, his own character, by the hand of another friend, Dr. John Eliot, accompanied it.

On the morning of the 20th June, 1798, at four o'clock, he was attacked with apoplexy, which deprived him of the powers of speech and motion; and he died before eleven.

The manner of his death was singularly in accordance with his own preference, expressed in the

fragment of poetry previously mentioned. It is as follows :

“ When faith and patience, hope and love,  
Have made us meet for heaven above,  
How blest the privilege to rise,  
Snatched in a moment to the skies !  
Unconscious, to resign our breath,  
Nor taste the bitterness of death.  
Such be my lot, Lord, if thou please,  
To die in silence and at ease.  
When thou dost know that I’m prepared,  
O seize me quick to my reward.  
But if thy wisdom sees it best  
To turn thine ear from this request —  
If sickness be the appointed way,  
To waste this frame of human clay ;  
If, worn with grief and racked with pain,  
This earth must turn to earth again ;  
Then let thine angels round me stand —  
Support me by thy powerful hand ;  
Let not my faith or patience move,  
Nor aught abate my hope or love ;  
But brighter may my graces shine,  
Till they’re absorbed in light divine.”

The funeral took place on the 22d of June. Dr. Kirkland preached on the occasion a sermon which expressed the sorrow of the community for the loss of one so loved and honored. Though many years have since passed away, the influence exerted upon society by the life of such a man does not cease

with his breath. He was an earnest and successful laborer in the cause of learning and literature. To such men as Dr. Belknap we owe the advantages now possessed by the inquirer into the past history of our country. His patriotism was pure and fearless, and he was ever ready to devote himself to his country's good. He was not remarkable for a splendid intellect or a wonderful genius, whose flights were beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals, but for a character harmonious in all its parts; an industry unceasingly exerted to promote the noblest objects; a nice discernment and discretion which tempered his natural enthusiasm; a heart truly beneficent, delighting to bless all within the sphere of its influence; and a life of purity and unaffected piety and devotion to his calling as a minister of the Gospel. He considered this relation as the noblest that man could sustain to his fellow-man; and he faithfully fulfilled its requirements from the time when he entered upon its sacred duties, to the last hours of his earthly existence.

As a preacher, he was earnest in his exhortations, but simple in his manner of address. His voice was clear and well modulated; but he used no gesticulations to enforce his arguments. His sermons were eminently practical, and his aim was to improve the hearts and lives of his people, rather than to disturb their minds with the discussion of controverted points of Christian doctrine. His death took place

before the fever of controversy, which has since so widely separated the congregational churches of New England, reached its height; and much curiosity has been felt and expressed as to the probable course he would have pursued, had his life been spared. Thus much may be said with safety, that he condemned no man for speculative opinions. His own views of the doctrine of the Trinity are given in the conclusion to a *Life of Dr. Watts*, which he wrote and published a few years before his death. It was published anonymously in 1793, together with a *Life of Dr. Doddridge* by Andrew Kippis; and the title of the volume is, "*Life of Watts and Doddridge.*" It has now become quite a scarce book. The Conclusion is added to this memoir, as containing Dr. Belknap's views on this subject, which he said were the result of thirty years' study.

Dr. Belknap at his death left a widow and five children; three of whom, one daughter and two sons, are still living.

This volume cannot be fitly concluded without a tribute to the memory of the worthy and beloved companion of more than thirty years of his life. She died January 20th, 1809. The following notice of her character was written, at the time of her decease, by the late Hon. John Davis, always a highly valued friend of the family.

"The amiable qualities and endowments of this respectable lady deservedly gained her the love and

esteem of her family and friends. To a cheerful, social, and friendly temper, she added the solid attractions of a cultivated mind ; and her deportment was uniformly regulated by the religion which she professed. For many years the estimable companion of a man of distinguished reputation in the church and in the literary world, she cherished his memory with reverence and affection. It was often the occupation of her leisure hours to examine, arrange, and peruse his extensive manuscript collections, and to indulge a fond attention to his favorite objects, by a recurrence to his valuable library. These characteristics rendered her an interesting companion to those who had the pleasure of an acquaintance with that ornament to our country ; it was a source of satisfaction to converse with her on his character, publications, and pursuits ; for, in temper and in taste, she appeared the ‘softened image’ of their departed friend. Since his decease, her society has been limited to a small circle of friends, who will gratefully remember the sincere and affectionate interest which she manifested in their welfare. The duties of her station she discharged with fidelity and propriety ; the sorrows of life she sustained with composure ; enjoyed its various blessings with grateful cheerfulness ; and, during her last brief but severe illness, exhibited the peaceful serenity and humble hopes which the Gospel inspires.”



THE fragment which follows in relation to the opinions of Dr. Watts, has an interest in connection with that controversy which began in the New England churches during Dr. Belknap's ministry, though it did not during his life involve the acrimony which afterwards attached to it. He took no very prominent part in the controversy. After Dr. Watts's death, much was said and written about his precise views on the subject of the Trinity, and it was understood that he had modified the opinions of which in his early years he had been a prominent advocate. The fact that his Psalms and Hymns were used so extensively in the New England churches, and that precisely the same modifications of theological opinion through which he was said to have passed were in progress here, turned much attention toward him. Dr. Belknap, in the preface to his own collection of sacred poetry for the churches, had adverted to the extreme views of the Trinity maintained by Dr. Watts; and, of course, his own attention was particularly engaged in the matter. It was known that Dr. Watts had expressed a wish to soften and modify some of the expressions used by him in some of his poems, though the liberty to do so had been denied him by the holder of the copyright.

In the following piece, therefore, it was the object of Dr. Belknap to state the precise views held by Dr. Watts on the doctrine of the Trinity. It will

be found, on perusal, to be a rather perplexed and abstruse statement. Its perplexity, however, is incident to its subject. Many sermons of the same substance and tenor were delivered at the time ; and, if they did not minister to edification, they at least served to show that there was abundant room for the exercise of charity upon subjects which it was so difficult to state with perspicuity.

“ On a review of this publication, so far as it respects Dr. Watts’s notion of the Trinity (which, I confess, it was a leading object with me to bring forward), I can easily imagine that some intelligent readers will be dissatisfied, and will think his scheme liable to equal objections with other schemes. I do not apprehend that it is incumbent on me to defend it, nor am I sanguine in my opinion that it is the true one ; though I confess that, in the main, it appears to me at present to be nearer the truth than that commonly received as orthodox, which maintains three *real persons*, or distinct intelligent beings, in the Godhead. If I am mistaken, I should be truly glad to be better informed. *Errare possum, Hæreticus esse nolo.* As I can have no interest to serve in opposing any article of sound doctrine, neither have I any pleasure in dissenting from popular opinions or modes of speech. I am fully persuaded, however, that the mode of explication here brought to view is not so essentially different from some others which have been usually allowed to be

orthodox, as some persons imagine. All that I here intend is to offer a few observations in proof of this, for the satisfaction of serious Christians, who have imbibed an early prejudice in favor of long-established systems, and certain human modes of speech, and who may be alarmed under a suspicion (which certain persons of better information have taken pains to promote) that my design is to promote *Socinianism* or *Arianism*; terms of reproach which too many (and some without understanding their meaning) are ever ready to apply to such as venture to think for themselves, and to adopt language different from that which human creeds have stamped as sacred, though the most remote from the language of the Bible. If such will be attentive in reading, and candid in judging, I hope to convince them, whether they fall in with my mode of explanation or not, that *I have done nothing against the truth, but for the truth.*

“According to Dr. Watts’s view of the present subject — ‘The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, are the one living and true God.’ To this proposition, I give my ready assent. And whoever does so, whatever be his peculiar mode of explication, I will maintain has as just a claim to the character of ORTHODOX, as they who do it in the *Athanasian* sense. And for any, who adopt that or any other mode of explication, to monopolize ORTHODOXY to themselves, is a degree of presumption unbecom-

ing fallible creatures, especially those who allow that the MODE of subsistence in the Sacred Three is not ascertained in Scripture ; and, indeed, it is inconsistent with the avowed Catholicism of the ablest and best writers, who are the most partial to the general Calvinistic system.

“ With respect to the idea of PERSONALITY, as applicable to the Father, Son, and Spirit, Dr. Watts differed from many Trinitarians, as he denied, (and I think with very sufficient reason,) “ that there are in Deity, Three Infinite Spirits, or really distinct persons, in the common sense of that term, each having a distinct intelligence, volition, power, &c. ; ” thinking such a supposition inconsistent with the proper UNITY of the Godhead ; which is doubtless one of the most obvious and fundamental doctrines of revelation.

“ But it is to be remembered, that, with regard to the definition of *personality*, Trinitarians widely differ among themselves. While some suppose it to be REAL, others think it only MODAL, or nominal ; and others, somewhat between both. Some of the two latter classes have charged the former with *Tritheism* ; and to me it seems difficult to clear the doctrine from the imputation. Nor can I conceive what Tritheism is, if this hypothesis does not come under the description. To assert a mere UNITY of ESSENCE or NATURE will not obviate the difficulty : for three divine persons, or beings, though of the

same nature, or — in other words — all of them EXACTLY ALIKE, (which seems to be the meaning of the term, and is the popular idea,) would be as really three Gods, as three human persons of the same nature, were they in all respects alike, would be three men. Such a sentiment, I think, ought to be zealously opposed as heretical.

“I grant, however, since they who maintain this doctrine do not see the consequence, but utterly disclaim it, and profess to believe in only ONE GOD, whom they worship as one Infinite Being, through one Mediator, it would be uncandid and unjust to pronounce them *Tritheists*; and in my idea it would be schismatical, for this reason alone, to separate from their worship and communion. Many such, whom I have known, I venerate as the excellent of the earth. And whatever peculiar modes of speech they may adopt in controversy, their language and apparent ideas, when engaged in divine *worship*, are such, that, in uniting with them, I literally comply with the apostolic injunction, Rom. xv. 6: ‘*With one mind and one mouth to glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*’

“But then on the same principles I must censure those Trinitarians as violating the laws of Christian candor, who upbraid such as hold the same general doctrine with the opposite heresy, and refuse to hold communion with them, because, on such a controverted matter as that of *personality*, they express them-



selves differently, and choose to adhere to the simplicity of Scripture language. This is particularly unbecoming in those who adopt the *modal scheme*, since the difference between them and the followers of Watts can be but small.

“As to those who think personality in the Godhead to be *somewhat between a person and a mode*, if there be any rational idea included in the term, they who consider ‘the *Manifest Wisdom*, and the *Active Energy* of Deity, as the WORD and the HOLY GHOST,’ may with good appearance of reason be admitted as coming within the same description. And they who talk of *three distinctions* in Deity, without any definition of the term, have little reason to censure such as in fact equally maintain three distinctions, but with a determinate meaning.

“As to those who use the common Trinitarian language in the SABELLIAN sense, (which, upon a close inquiry, I have found to be the case with some, and have reason to think it so with many,) they have little reason to cry out ‘heresy’ at the mode of interpretation for which I am here apologizing.

“That it should by any be stigmatized with the name either of SOCINIANISM or ARIANISM, appears to me peculiarly uncandid and unjust. The Ante-Nicene Fathers evidently adopted this hypothesis. And if I understand the great reformer Calvin

aright, he in like manner conceived of the WORD and SPIRIT of GOD as the WISDOM and POWER of Deity PERSONIFIED. The pious Mr. Baxter adopted a like personification, and severely reproves those orthodox men who anathematize them that espouse such a mode of explaining the Trinity.\* Certain it is that Socinians reject such kind of language, and disavow the notion of a Trinity in any form; not now to say any thing of the *atonement*, which they universally deny, but which those I am defending as strenuously maintain.

“As to Arians, properly so called, if I have any idea of their sentiments, they consider the *Logos* and the *Holy Spirit* as CREATED BEINGS; which I think, with Dr. Watts, is an error, most manifestly repugnant to Scripture doctrine.

“It is true, Dr. Watts maintained the *Man Christ Jesus* to have been a created being. But if on that account his followers are justly charged with heresy, I know not who will be exempt; for I suppose all will allow that Christ was properly MAN, and as such created. Some, indeed, maintain that he was a human PERSON, as really as any other man is so, and on this ground deny that his *Divinity* was a *real person*, distinct from that of the Father, (for otherwise there would be TWO PERSONS in Christ;) while others strangely and arbitrarily suppose, (to

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\* Baxter's Works, vol. ii. page 132.

avoid this last absurdity) that the method of Christ was merely a created NATURE. But both allow 'the Deity of Christ to consist in the union of the Godhead and the manhood in the person of *Emanuel*, so that in him GOD *was manifest in the flesh.*' This general agreement I look upon as all that is essential to true orthodoxy, and a sufficient bond of union. How much farther Christian charity may safely extend, it is not my present business to inquire. I will only observe, that they who have investigated subjects of doctrinal controversy with the greatest care and impartiality will be the most ready to confess, that there are difficulties on all sides, where the Scripture has not explicitly decided; and will see the greatest reason for diffidence of themselves, and candor towards one another. These are two principal lessons which I have learned from the study of more than thirty years, and these I am principally solicitous to inculcate upon others. If this publication should in any degree contribute to answer this end, I shall be thankful, even though it should expose me to the censures of some good men to whose esteem I am by no means indifferent, though their charity is much more confined than my own; and whom, whatever they may think or say of me, I will love and honor."



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